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"Where there is no vision the people perish"

THE POETRY REVIEW

THE JOURNAL OF THE POETRY SOCIETY (INCORPORATED)
AND A MAGAZINE OF GENERAL
POETIC INTEREST

▼

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POETS AND PLAYWRIGHTS

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The Poetry Review

THE JOURNAL OF THE POETRY SOCIETY (INCORPORATED)

AND A MAGAZINE OF GENERAL POETIC INTEREST

VOL. XXXVIII 1947

THE Poetry Society, which enters its 38th year during the period covered by this issue of its journal, can bear witness to the existence of a much wider, more general regard for poetry now than in Edwardian days. Arnold Bennett, welcoming the formation of the Society, declared it would justify itself if it only killed the prevalent idea that poetry was a ridiculous thing for a man to be associated with. Professional and business men who cherished an interest in poetry kept it to themselves as a closely guarded secret and were surprised when they found inadvertently this exotic taste was shared by an occasional acquaintance. Now even medical men admit an addiction to poetry without loss of professional confidence.

The attitude deplored by Arnold Bennett has been modified if it has not disappeared completely. No one needs to hide his acquaintance with the first of the arts which is no longer regarded an exclusive hierophantic cult. The policy of The Poetry Society has been to break down prejudice and privilege, to bring poetry into the open and enlarge the vein of poetry which, as Carlyle asserted, lies at the heart of every man, to prove by the identification with the Society of prominent men of affairs that an interest in poetry is a common possession, inspiring and illuminating the man of action and a joy to the common man. The regard for poetry evinced by successive distinguished presidents has had a great influence in supporting and extending the sensible appreciation and use of poetry, enlarging the approach to it and nullifying the "ridiculous" reproach. The two wars that have intervened and bitten like iron into our souls have broadened the appeal of poetry by fortifying our courage as well as clarifying and deepening our emotions, and we can affirm that poetry has never been more widely read and discussed since the primitive days when it was the spoken literature of the people and the bards were the historians and prophets of the race. And the consideration of it by the younger generation will be met by the finer efflorescence of its expression. The somewhat feeble, jejune, tortured verse of a period that is passing without distinction and regret is developing into a more universal sensibility, disciplined and polished, with a greater beauty of form as well as of thought and emotion and not remote from daily needs, activities and aspirations.

That what we are concerned with is not a high-brow but a simple human business, desired by the commonalty everywhere is further indicated by a co-incidental note of great pertinency received as we go to press from Mr. Christmas Humphreys, a member of the Council of The Poetry Society.

"I have just returned from a flight round the world. I went by way of the United States last January to prosecute in the International War Trials at Tokyo and, my work being done, left in September for a leisurely journey home via various Buddhist countries, living with native friends in each country I

visited. I have now stayed in Japanese, Chinese, Siamese, Burmese, Indian, and Singhalese homes, visited the Temples of Buddhists, Taoists, Confucians, and Mohammedans, and studied the work of the Theosophical Society and the Ramakrishna Mission. I have studied the dancing of those countries, and their poetry (in translation), and inevitably written a good deal of verse myself. And the result of my pilgrimage? That when their governments allow them to live in peace, all men are much the same. All are concerned with home and family, with a day's work and its reward, and recreation at the end of it. I have seen such beauty as I did not know to exist this side of heaven, beauty of earth and sea and sky, beauty of sacrifice and cheerful endurance, beauty of art, both old and new, beauty of purpose and ideal. Would that I could express one tenth of the simple grandeur of the human heart when left to its own natural ways to self-enlightenment! For all men seem to follow the way of the good or the true or the beautiful if only politicians let them. Wherefore I say, Up the Poetry Society, and down with *all* politics!"

We regret to record the death on October 6th of Miss Julie Huntsman, one of the founders of The Poetry Society. Miss Huntsman responded with great enthusiasm to the publicly expressed proposal to form an organisation for bringing together the scattered people seriously interested in poetry and to promote a higher standard of the reading and speaking of it which strongly appealed to her as a prominent exponent and a pioneer in the art of speaking verse. At the inaugural meeting of February 24th, 1909 she was elected a member of the Council, on which she served for many years. On her retirement a few years ago she was elected an Honorary Vice-President of the Society in recognition of her splendid and continuous collaboration. She was the first to give effect to a basic part of the Society's policy by organising the formation of the first Centre, Hampstead, which was carried on very effectively under the devoted presidency of Lady Strachey and has more lately been under the presidency of Miss Huntsman herself who, only a few days before her death, arranged the autumn programme of meetings and took part in the first reading of the new series. The meetings of the Centre, for many years held at her studios in the Finchley Road, which were always open to the Society's use, were a model of what these meetings were intended to be and constituted a veritable poetry lovers' fellowship.

To Miss Huntsman the successful institution of the Verse-speaking Examinations was largely due : she provided the first candidates from among her pupils and from the several schools she visited, and long continued to be the mainstay of the early auditions, her successful work being recognised and encouraged by Sir Johnson Forbes-Robertson and Sir Frank Benson and other authorities who collaborated with the Society. Her own annual recitals at the Steinway Hall were admirable expositions of the art she cultivated so assiduously and delightfully and, as impressive poetry festivals, were the precursors of later developments in this form of expression.

The passing of this devoted colleague, a brilliant teacher and poetry speaker, is a reminder of the great progress in poetic appreciation with which she was associated. The improvement of the oral interpretation of poetry, one of the chief objects of The Poetry Society, has been remarkable, the elocutionary stage has been expanded into an art combining voice and vision and affording the means of personal interpretative expression to thousands who find outlet and inspiration in the words of others, and are enabled to convey to others something of "the

strength and joy" to be found in poetry, which is provided for sound as well as sight reading. The greater part of the 150,000 verse speakers heard by The Poetry Society remain on the elocutionary level, but they have been introduced to poetry in the most direct and effective way, have become familiar with its structure, with metre and rhythm and phrasing, with voice production and control. Occasionally a Muse emerges—an exhilarating discovery, a rich beautiful voice giving an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, the beauty of voice being associated with facial glow and the light that never was on sea or land but only on the illuminated countenance of the human spirit made flesh. We still hear much nonsense about poetry reading and speaking and the many inhibitions surrounding it. The spirit is submerged by the word, poetry is reduced to a dead level, and turned into prose, all feeling emasculated and individuality repressed. Miss Margaret Rawlings has said many excellent things when acting as examiner for the Society's Gold Medal and demonstrated the principles of poem production, which, although involving a host of details and pitfalls—Browning makes Pompilia say, "Poetry is a difficult thing to read", —is after all based on sense and sensibility and the kernel of genius, the art of taking pains plus individual accomplishment and in this particular mode of self expression, the possession of a cultivated, controlled, voice. We are proudly able to record splendid progress in the sane appreciation and uses of poetry with confidence in a progressive future.

Stimulated by other offers in *The Poetry Review*, a generous contributor, Mr. Howard Parsons, has been moved to make an original addition thereto. He writes "I have long been convinced that the most powerful literary work is the shortest, *i.e.*, the epigram. It retains its hold on the memory long after trenchant articles on the same subject are forgotten, and remains the text from which, at odd times, the contemplative mind abstracts useful guidance for its own activities. It proves that the poet can check abuses more effectually, on occasion, than a new law, while affording pleasure to the reader. For over half a century I have pondered at intervals on the one which I believe first appeared on a wall in the Stock Exchange

The queen may grant a title
But honour give she can't,
And a title without honour
Is but a Baron Grant.

"Surely that has tended to make for honesty in the City ever since! I have no hesitation in quoting it, for I can add that Baron Grant has a strong claim to the gratitude of Londoners, as he presented them with the open space of Leicester Square. I have pleasure in offering the sum of Five Guineas for the best four-line epigram that teaches some such lesson, without giving offence to a living person, you, Sir, to give the decision". Address Epigram, POETRY REVIEW.

Effective epigrams like satire are rare in these days although they have formed a definite, forceful form in English poetry. Burns and Byron indulged in it. William Watson practised it pungently.

The Council of The Poetry Society propose to make the recent Desert Island poems plebiscite the basis of a popular collection of poems which the majority of readers would wish to have preserved and to be available for everyone, representing a successor to our Pocket Book of English Poetry, now out of print. In

consequence the enquiry of a year ago is extended. Readers are asked to submit lists of up to 100 favourite poems of any period. It will be remembered that the original enquiry concerned post 1800 poems only. The line limit is now increased to 200. Collaborators in what will be their own and everyone's anthology are referred to the admirable report and analysis of the original enquiry by Christmas Humphreys, published in the November-December 1945 POETRY REVIEW. The new selection of immortal poems should be addressed to "The Anthology Editor", 33 Portman Square, W.1, before the end of March.

Translations and biography by Clara M. Candlin of *The Rapier of Luz*, patriot poet of China, is the latest addition to Murray's *Wisdom of the East* series which was founded in 1904 by our colleague, Capt. L. A. Cranmer-Byng (who died last January), with the object of introducing to the English-speaking public some of the wisdom of the east through translations from eastern classics, and through books by well-known scholars interpreting the east. The original editor's son, who has recently returned from active service in the East, is adding to the 90 volumes provided by his father, who was devoted to Chinese poetry in particular and would have welcomed this selection from 10,000 delicate and characteristic poems of the foremost poet of the Southern Sung Dynasty who died in 1210 at the age of 85 after a very stormy life interspersed with excursions into poetry and essays on the art of living. Apropos this sustained concern in the poetry of the east and of our own notices in the present and recent issues of the *Poetry Review* of poems emanating from India, it is pertinent to mention that the Oriental Book Service of London are about to publish through Frederick Muller Ltd., *A Garland of Indian Poetry,* compiled by the well-known iterary historian, H. G. Rawlinson, who has made a very careful selection of the best examples of Indian traditional and classical poetry available in good English translation. His book should interest not only poetry lovers but those who wish to understand something of the thought of Ancient India. Translators include Binyon, Tagore, Monier Williams, John Scott, Max Muller. The book was issued earlier in the year in paper covers by the Royal India Society, but was sold to members only. This new edition, cloth bound, is the first to be available to the general public. The price will be 7s. 6d. and publication date will probably be in early January.

A crop of articles and even books dealing with Virgil are emerging, some from most unlikely quarters, but all indicating that the falling away of classical education is a grievous loss to human culture if not repaired. If one cannot read Virgil now in the original one must have an opportunity of reading about him. Following on C. M. Bowra's eloquent dissertation on "Vergil and the Ideal of Rome" in his memorable chapters on the influence of the epic *From Virgil to Milton* (Macmillan 15s. od.) and the addition of another Vergilian study to Mr. Nevile Watts' record in *The Vision Splendid* of his thirty years experience of curing the poetry-blind, we now have a further attempt to fill this deplorable void by F. J. H. Letters who, in his *Virgil* (Sheed and Ward 8s. 6d.) traces the sources of the poet's inspiration and development and the extent of his influence, and proceeds to an intensive study of the poetry itself with liberal use of translated passages from the work of the "wielder of the stateliest measure ever moulded by the lips of man" and the builder of the greatest Roman epic.

*The Browning Marriage**

THE CASE FOR A PERMANENT MEMORIAL

ONE hundred years ago Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett were married in the stately parish church of St. Marylebone. We are making a plan to commemorate that. It is to build a chapel onto the Church, for a lasting memorial. The plans are appropriate and beautiful and simple, so that their cost may not be more than is appropriate.

Is this a good idea? May I say why I think that it is.

Is it because poets need monuments of stone, to preserve their memories? No! Robert Browning's monument is the Grammarian's Funeral. Elizabeth Barrett's is the Sonnets from the Portuguese. Neither poet needs individually any other monument. But their names mean more to us than their poems. Take the sound of these two names together, and you have—not a third sound, but a star—

—"a star to every wandering bark

—"whose worth's unknown although its height be taken."

They are an example, a most memorable example, of the perfect union of high minds and lives. It is an assurance of the value of human life, to learn from them that it is not ordinary minds only that are the better for life-long companionship, that high minds as well as common minds gain by the light and warmth of stable and unreserved association with one other out of all the world. To both of these, who were no common beings, their marriage was an unspeakable benediction. It made them happy, and the world happier by a richer harvest from their powers. This third gift they gave us, this star, deserves commemoration.

We shall find no other place so appropriate for a memorial of this gift of theirs as the church in which they were married, in sight of the altar steps which Robert Browning kissed because it was there that Elizabeth Barrett stood when she became his wife. There was much in their lives that may and should be commemorated elsewhere. But the scene of their marriage is the scene for a memorial to their union, and for thanksgiving for its inspiration. It is there that all true married lovers should come to think of them and to say silent thanks for their lesson what is best in life, and how good beyond measure that best can be.

The form which is proposed for the memorial is a chapel, opening into the church. I think that the form is appropriate, and Mr. Tapper's design has a stately beauty in keeping with the church. That the memorial should be a chapel is in agreement with tradition. In other days a treasure of our land was the numerous chantries, shrines, and chapels, built to commemorate the dead. They were beautiful in themselves, and they brought peace and refreshment to busy and tired people. They were havens from the winds of life, where one could escape into calm thoughts about things deeper than daily business, and, more than all other things, about "the famous nations of the dead", and all they have made for us of what is good in the world. Prayers for departed souls were, no doubt, their first purpose, and they are out of fashion: but remembrance of the great, one may hope, is not out of fashion—remembrance of those at least of the great who—

—"borrow not
glory from those who make mankind their prey;"

* An address given by Lord Kennet of the Dene at a meeting in the St. Marylebone Town Hall to commemorate the Browning wedding centenary and initiate the memorial chapel scheme of which Lord Kennet, a former President of The Poetry Society, is Treasurer. The Poetry Society heads the Fund with a donation of one hundred guineas.

—"who waged contention with their times' decay,
"and of the past are all that cannot pass away"

—and gratitude to them is not out of fashion; and could the custom be restored of enshrining their memories, so that we may visit their shrines in unostentatious pilgrimage, and wait and think there about them and the beauty and wisdom they left us for a legacy, that would be a good thing.

Let us take this opportunity, and begin with a shrine to these two poets, who made their lives together a poem. The world will be the better for it, and our nice, grimy old London will be much the better for it. Most of the old shrines and chantries are gone, destroyed by greed, indifference, and the senseless rage of the fanatic. Let us have new ones, and let us help to make a beginning here and now. It is pleasant to think that wayfarers in our drab town, passing and repassing to gain their daily bread, will be reminded by the sight of this building that man cannot live by bread alone, that the spirit also claims its food—the food of an occasional pause to think about what life is for, and what we have learnt about that from our best teachers, the poets.

The Brownings are a happy choice for the purpose. It is not the mere accident of their centenary that makes one turn to their memory just now. Their work is the treasure not of London only or of England only; it is the treasure of all, wherever our language is spoken, in the old world and the new. It is for both men and women, and for all their sorts and conditions. It ranges from the most ordinary and even the lowliest things of the everyday world, to the highest things of the spirit. It deals with things of universal interest; it deals with experiences which are the common lot of all, with love, life, and death, with sorrow and joy, with the beauty of the world and its ugliness, with time and eternity. So this shrine will not be for our own nation only. It will be international, a focus for the thoughts of men and women all over the world. We hope and believe that all over the world those who reverence the memory of the Brownings will think of the chapel as their common possession, and will visit it when they come here, on a pilgrimage of thanks and praise.

I imagine that I hear someone, someone young perhaps, say "how strange! If there ever was a thing dashed to bits it is the culture of the Victorian age, with all its ideals. Now when surrounded by its ruins we are struggling to find a new culture and new ideals, you set out to commemorate two Victorian poets. What an odd choice!"

I am a Victorian and may be suspected of prejudice. Nevertheless, let me try and explain why I do not think it an odd choice. About this I know that I am only giving one man's opinion, and that others may differ. With an apology, then, let me say that these two poets are those whom I most like to commemorate, now that we are trying to raise our heads again after the blizzard, because they were optimists, and because their optimism was of a particular sort which was not the common optimism of Victorian days. That was an optimism based upon an over-confident belief in progress. The world, it was thought, was not good enough for us, and the conditions of human life were not acceptable; but it was in the order of things that they should go on getting better. Life would be worth living some day: and we must live for the future.

"Far earlier will the roses blow
"In after years, those happier years."

What has happened in the 20th century has made us doubt that basis for optimism. We are not so sure that progress is in the order of things. If, then, life is only acceptable on condition that it will be better some day, and if we doubt

whether it will be better, we doubt whether it is acceptable. Is not this the cause of the "sick fatigue, the languid doubt", in short of the pessimism, which besets us in these post-war times?

The cure is to have courage to accept life as it is, without the anodyne of hopes for some imagined future. It is an optimism that is unshaken by disaster. Now that, I think, was the optimism of the Brownings, and particularly of Robert Browning. It differed from the common optimism of Victorian times, because he found life acceptable as it is, and not only as it might be. The faith in life which his poetry teaches has therefore foundations which enable it to stand unshaken amid the ruins of Victorian hopes. Those, and those only, are the foundations on which we can rebuild our faith anew, now that we doubt the certainty of progress. We may turn for courage to his robust and confident acceptance of things as they are, now that things as they are are in many ways so little to our liking.

So it is natural that the plan should have support from all quarters, and particularly from men who represent groups of public opinion. Let me mention the Poet Laureate, Lord Wavell (President of The Poetry Society), Lord Lytton (President of the Royal Society of Literature), Sir Frederic Kenyon (Secretary of the British Academy), Sir Stanley Marchant (Principal of the Royal Academy of Music), the Churchwardens of the Church, and, by no means least, Mr. J. G. Winant, lately Ambassador from the United States. Mr. Winant has always shown us that he understands that England has a soul as well as a body. With all the practical troubles which we have in this island just now, perhaps it is easier for a sympathetic American to remember that than it is for us ourselves.

But it is true. Our island has a soul as well as a body: and that for which I am most grateful to those who have started this idea is, that they are reminding and assuring us of that. We are in danger of forgetting it, and of losing heart. It has seemed at times, since the renewed catastrophe of the second war, as if we had no thought left for anything but material things.

If sharp frosts have struck some dearly beloved plant, when the winter is over one watches it anxiously to see whether it has been killed or not. For a time it seems quite dead, and then at last it puts out some shoot of green, and one knows that, however black and sere its twigs seem, it is still alive within, and that in course of time it will flower again. So it is with the life of the mind in our country after the war. It has been frozen by misfortune; but now it puts out a shoot again. We are grateful, I think to those who, by this proposal, tell us that the sap is still rising, that our land is not so wholly overwhelmed by its difficulties that it cannot take any thought at all for beauty. We welcome this brave proclamation. It is encouraging to have an opportunity to throw down a gage to the spirit of mere materialism.

Such a purpose is worth some sacrifice, even in difficult times, even more so then than at other times. It helps us in our difficulties to be reminded that there is a scale of values more real than that of pounds shillings and pence. At such times, no doubt, there are always some to say—"We cannot now afford any time, any thought, any money, for anything but material needs. We are too badly off". To compare great things with small, I have no doubt that Pericles had criticism of this sort to meet when he proposed to rebuild the Parthenon. People said, "Some other time, some other time!—when we have raised the standard of living in Athens, and restored the balance of trade with Persia". But Pericles rebuilt the Parthenon, and the world has not been sorry. Let us remind ourselves of another occasion, on which there were some who had indignation within themselves, and

said, "Why was this waste of ointment made? For it might have been sold for 300 pence!" We do not now think that they were right. Is it not all a question of measure and degree? This modest plan and the small effort which it will cost will be a sign, small but significant, that the lifegiving sap of our national culture is still rising.

We ask you then for your sympathy and support, to build this chapel in memory of Robert and Elizabeth Browning, in the church where they were married, to be a place of pilgrimage for all lovers of poetry and all who have found life better worth living because of the example which they gave of the perfection of life in the marriage of true minds. KENNET

Inspired by Margaret Rawlings reading from Elizabeth Barrett's "Sonnets from the Portuguese" at the Service at St. Marylebone Parish Church, 12th September, 1946, to commemorate the marriage of Robert and Elizabeth Browning.

HOW measure time for immortality,
You who would praise the undeparted dead ?
Are they not here, in love's long unity,
In this war-shadowed church where they were wed ?
For in them both was the undying word
Which falls not silent in the arms of death,
And now resurgent love, unsepulchred,
Takes on new life upon another's breath.
For you, Elizabeth, have taught these lips
More than your words, more than their perfect art,
Taught them a love whose sister passion strips,
Once more, the veil that hid your virgin heart ;
And standing where you stood, as straight and true,
She holds your hand and worships him with you.

H. W. Harding.

This unique wedding centenary commemoration revived the old controversy concerning the origin and genuineness of the most exquisite sequence of love lyrics ever produced. Browning himself disposed of all doubts on the matter in a letter to Julia Wedgewood in '64 in which he explicitly stated:

"That was a strange, heavy crown, that wreath of sonnets, put on me one morning unawares, three years after it had been twined—all this delay, because I happened early to say something against putting one's loves into verse: then again, I said something else on the other side, one evening at Lucca—and next morning she said hesitatingly, 'Do you know I once wrote some poems about *you*?'—and then—'There they are, if you care to see them,'—and there was the little book I have here—with the last sonnet dated two days before our marriage. How I see the gesture, and hear the tones,—and, for the matter of that, see the window at which I was standing, with the tall mimosa in front, and little church-court to the right. Afterwards, the publishing of them was through me—in the interests of the poet, I chose that they should be added to the other works, not minding the undue glory to me, if the fact should become transparent: there was a trial at covering it a little by leaving out one sonnet which was plainly a connexion with the former works: but it was put in afterwards when people chose to pull down the mask which, in old days, people used to respect at a masquerade. But I never cared. 'The Portuguese'—purposely an ambiguous title—was that Caterina who left Camoens the riband from her hair."

George Drossinis

A MODERN GREEK POET

BRITISH poets are known all over the world, but sometimes a foreign author escapes our attention. Although translated into thirteen languages, very little of the work of George Drossinis is to be had in English. Yet this Greek poet has often been compared to Theocritus. Intensely national his work is unmistakably of the country where the Ode and the Classical Drama were born. Doric in style, his writing reflects the luminosity of the sky of Attica. He has sung of the peasants and the fisher-folk, of the mountains and the beauty of his country—and the Greek people have taken his poetry to their hearts.

Recent editions of folk-lore verses, gathered by collectors from the lips of the mountaineers, are found to contain, between the verses of unknown scribes, poems by Drossinis. Nothing pleases their author more than this proof of his adoption as a national bard of his country. As was the case with the Scottish poet, Robert Burns, in his day, the young people of his land are often found carrying a volume of his verse about their daily life. So closely are the writings of Drossinis interwoven in the lives of the people, that in the trials and emergencies that beset them, they turn to the poet for comfort. A young woman in her last moments asked to have the following verse read to her—and died experiencing the poet's thought:

"What do you search for as the twilight falls
Your gaze for ever lost o'er the distant hills?

What do you see?
Is it the house across the road?
Is it the gently swaying tree?
Is it the slowly setting sun
That you behold?

Beyond the house across the road,
Beyond the field and distant hills,
Beyond the glorious sun, the swaying tree,
Something—more distant yet
I see . . ."

Another instance is of a young man in despair at having lost his employment, and finding no other, search how he might, decided to end his life. Over his last meal, he picked up a journal and found Drossinis' poem "Faith". This says in effect: "If on taking your prayers to the altar you find they are not answered,

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[This article on a distinguished Greek poet, George Drossinis, who has recently celebrated his 85th birthday, has been written on notes provided by an admirer of Drossinis, the Hon. Mrs. Nazos (the daughter of the late Lord Abercrombie), by Mrs. H. Fletcher-Lee, the author of the successful play "Robert Burns", performed some years ago in Edinburgh, and of the play "Rembrandt", produced by the State Theatre of Budapest in 1939 and in course of production by the State Theatre of Bucharest when war came. For this contribution and many other courtesies we are indebted to Dr. Caclamanos, former Greek Minister in London, and for above 30 years an active Vice-President of The Poetry Society. —*Ed.*].

still have faith and wait for a miracle". Reading it raised a faint hope in his heart, and he decided to wait to end his days till the morning. . . when he received a letter offering him a new post . . . So interwoven with life is the consolation offered by the poet.

Drossinis when asked which of his poems he preferred, replied: "Do you remember the story of Praxiteles? When Phryne came to see him and he offered her the work in his studio which she liked best, she was unable to decide—and he refused to decide for her. But, later, in the artist's absence, Phryne sent him a message that his studio was on fire—and Praxiteles exclaimed: "Run! Save Eros and the Satyr!" . . . Well, I should say: "Save the Funeral Song". This poem is so essentially Greek in character that adequate translation is impossible. It tells of the death of a beautiful maiden of Euboea, and of the glory of the island: the life of the country people vividly portrayed.

Drossinis has the magic touch which brings to life events and feelings that have been experienced, and his human appeal is correspondingly wide: particularly as his philosophical outlook adds hope and wisdom to experience. Many Greeks look upon him as a philosopher as well as a poet.

But although it is by his poems that he will be remembered, his novels have brought him renown—and are widely translated. The early stories, written during the Romantic Period, might well have taken after that style, but they kept their own distinctive character, and the independence which is so marked a feature of the work of this writer. His novel, *Amaryllis*, is translated into English, as well as a few of his early poems, notably *The Greek Soil*. The latter is often heard in his own country, recited at many a national and scholastic gathering.

Here is the translation of "Grecian Soil":

Now that I must journey far across the sea,
Now that years may dwindle ere again we meet,
Let me take on parting just one gift from thee,
O beloved Country, O my Country sweet—
Just one gift made holy by thy fragrant breath,
Soothing me in sorrow, battle, pain and toil,
Guarding me from sickness, guarding me from death:
Just one tiny handful of thy Grecian soil.

Soil that has been freshened by the breeze of night,
Soil that has been sweetened by the rain of May,
Soil that has been scented by the Summer bright,
Soil for ever blessed, soil that bears for aye
—Fertile from the beauty of the Pleiads born,
Fertile from the kisses of the sunbeams gay—
Fragrant vines all tendrilled, tall and yellow corn,
Green and waving laurels, olives gaunt and gray.

Soil for ever honoured, from whose stones was built
The Parthenon, the fairest temple 'neath the sun;
Soil to Glory wedded, on whose breast was spilt
Blood from gallant Souli, blood from Marathon;
Soil that has enfolded the heroic slain
From bold Missolonghi, from Psara's dark slope;
Soil whose magic rouses in my flagging brain
Courage, pride and glory, energy and hope.

Talisman, for ever on my breast 'twill stay
And my heart's protector ever it shall be,
And its might shall vanquish the seductions gay
Of the fair lands lying far beyond the sea.
For its charms shall bind me stronger day by day,
And where'er I travel but one wish shall burn
In my heart for ever, in my soul for aye:
To return, O Hellas, once more to return.

And if it be fated—cruel fate and drear—
That thy strand, my Country, I should see no more,
On my chilling bosom I shall feel thee near,
I shall kiss thee dying, distant be thy shore.
Aye, if o'er the ocean I be laid to rest,
Lo' a foreign grave-yard's bitterness 'twill foil
If I clasp in slumber to my frozen breast
Just one tiny handful of thy Grecian soil.

Drossinis' understanding of child-life is shown in his charming *Stories for Children,* which also has a wide circulation in France, where his work is particularly appreciated. Professor Clément, the distinguished French critic, wrote in 1932 about the collection of Poems entitled *Night-Fall*: "This is for me the finest flower of Drossinis' writings. Though the general expression is one, each poem reveals a special character of its own . . ., and the reader is enthralled by the continuous development of one piece into another". "Night will be Falling":

And as we slowly wend our way
Back to the village,
The length'ning shadows of the waning day
Will stretch across the newly threshed corn,
Darkening the meadows.

And in the gathering twilight
The little peasant huts will peep—
Through the broad branches of the pines—
Startlingly white . . .

Then, from afar,
We'll hear the distant bleating of the sheep,
The evening chime from the church tower;
From glowing hearths, the smoke will rise,
Quite still,
Whilst, at the village fountain,
The drowsy oxen drink their fill.

"The work of this gifted Greek poet", continues Professor Clement, "has for us a fascinating quality that takes at once our imagination and our heart . . . The highly praised ancients have not surpassed the charm and simplicity of his pictures, and Theocritus himself, with all his wonderful art, is less touching for us moderns because his poetry is lacking in one great quality frequently found in Drossinis—the revelation of the whole soul of the artist". Another critic, in the *Revue Contemporaine,* says that Drossinis is the leader of Neo-Greek poetry, dis-

tinguished by philosophic thought and the power to analyse the rich and complicated subtleties of the heart.

Now an octogenarian, Drossinis is at work on his Memoirs, *Scattered Leaves from My Life*—the first Volume of which has already been published, and the second awaiting an allocation of paper, which is as scarce in Greece as it is in Britain. One chapter in this work is devoted to Rupert Brooke, whose poems Drossinis admires whole-heartedly.

"Upon my forehead I've never wished
A laurel garland to be placed.
The humble crowning of the grass
In the shade of the olive tree—
'Tis enough for me".

Thus sang George Drossinis who, with the born poet's joy and absorption in his work, thinks little of reward. He lives a simple life of retirement, happy in the beautiful surroundings of his little villa at Keohissia—a summer resort near Athens. He sits at work on his balcony, with its wonderful view over the plains and mountains of Attica.

His father and grandfather served their country in different ways—the latter fighting and dying heroically (1826) for the liberty of Greece at Misselonghi, where Byron also gave his life in the same cause. Drossinis was educated at Athens, and later went to Leipzig for some years to study contemporary Art and Literature. He returned to Athens to help with the education of the rising generation. He edited a national review and took charge of the Society of Books on Education. When the Academy of Athens was founded, he became, and still is, one of its leading Academicians. His impression on the life and thought of his country is deep and, it is safe to say, lasting.

"Vain was the chief's, the sage's pride.
They had no poet, and they died". *Horace.*

H. FLETCHER-LEE.

An illustration by Phillip Casse to Jean Kenward's *Rain* (see p.62).
(by courtesy of W. H. Allen).

Tiff

SO they left the forge where the rosy crook of steel
Hissed on the hoof, with its smell of glue, and the fire
Whose gasp and blush flung a feather of sparks to tunnel
Into the funnel of gloom that hooded its glare:
And the smith, bold back-bent under bay belly, to feel
The fit; rasp raking, and the steam's spurt from the runnel.

Where the rutted road ran gutters from recent rain
They went, where the beeches bunched their muscled silver thighs,
And above the twigs were damp, were dripping still
On the bird-claw beech-roots gripping the rim of the bank,
Beating black wings above on the blinded Autumn skies;
Where the brown beech-loving bracken was rotten and rank.

"And I", he said, "and I"—and her silence galled;
"And it's always I", she replied as she turned her head;
And he sought for words but to find reply forestalled,
And their lightly-stepping love, that had born them boldly ahead
Stumbled suddenly, pecked at the pull of the reins,
And estrangement laid a sluice on the race of the veins.

Trees, trees, spread out your screen
Between those two
Tell not how sudden and unseen
And swift resentment grew.

How the trunks were suddenly weeds, and the air a stagnant pool
Under a scum of cloud, with its cold decaying smell,
And the bitter body wrangled behind blunt weapon words,
Plucking the nerves that jerked the pupper mind, its fool
And pretext to supplant the stifled strife so well
Desired, with niggle and twitter of nerves like the natter of birds.

And love was forgotten then, as a fold of the moulded hill
Bore them out of the wood by an upland bare and ploughed
And the sun's wan shilling peeped from a pocket of tweed-grey cloud,
And the wrangle swelled and sank, and nerves in a loud cold jangle
Clashed, no blood-born anger to cleanse and to kill;
And in silence they passed the gate that the tall briars tangle.

And the silence followed them, down the clay-deep track,
Past the rusty plough in the hedge, to the hillside barn
That lay hull down in a hollow of rolling hill;
When the sun came suddenly bright through a rent in the skirts of the wrack,
And they found the dragon was dead as they came in sight of the farm,
And the old desire renewed, with plenty and overspill.

And then it was brightness breaking; it was sultry thunder rain;
It was snow's relief after frost, was the glare of the actual sun

From its creek of gilt-edged cloud, across the wintry day
Pouring, as love poured back to that silence full of pain;
And they stumbled into the barn with its single slantwise ray,
And knew the skirmish of words was over and done.

And the golden moment bloomed, in the deep barn's broken gloom,
Flowered on the grave of struggle, leapt from its lair,
Like a rocket soared from the lumbered, cumbered room,
With a skirt full of fires and stars, that towered in the autumn air;
Like a spring that clothes the ground in a country of candid rock
Their new love swept, overstepped the forgotten struggle and shock.

And they left the barn, where the rafters were ragged with webs,
And the tangled harrow lay by the rusty plough,
As the eyelid of dusk crept down on the pale blue ball of the day,
And passion and petulance both had left them now;
Had left them sweet and calm as they turned away
And followed the track, that follows the light which ebbs
Down the long cold shore of the sky, where the stars like seashells lay.

Trees, trees, stretch out your arms
To greet them in;
Join hands to bar all harms,
All strife within.

John Sibly.

In the House of the Red Branch

IN the House of the Red Branch
Deirdre and Naisi play chess.

Safe, warm, and well befriended,
Royally welcomed, regally housed,
Young, happy, lovers unsundered,
And returned at last to the land of their birth.

In the House of the Red Branch
Deirdre and Naisi play chess.

Ruddily falls the leaping firelight
On the rich hangings, the soft-piled furs,
The golden goblets, and on Naisi's beauty,
The black-haired, red-cheeked, white-skinned beauty
Of Naisi, desire of Deirdre's heart.

In the House of the Red Branch
Deirdre and Naisi play chess.

What is this pang in the breast of Deirdre?
Are they not safe, shut in together,
Windows barred and doors barricaded
By the strong hands of the sons of Usnach?

There is no place where the hostile eye
May peep and pry on the lovers' seclusion.
No place, no place—with the world locked out
Why this keen pang in the breast of Deirdre?

"O Naisi, Naisi, see, see,
The prying face, the spy's gleaming eyeball
There, peeping through at the little window
Left at the back—O Naisi, Naisi!"

Is there no way that lovers' seclusion
May be safe, shut from the world's menace?

He lifts his hand, he hurls the chessman,
It breaks the eye of the spying creature,
Who runs, who tells his lord King Conor
It was worth the loss of his eye to have looked on
Deirdre, Deirdre, the ever lovely.

O fated lovers, is it even so,
Shall the lifted hand that defends against menace
Be the very cause of the final undoing?

The rest is a tale of wrath and sorrow,
Of the aged king undone with jealousy
Claiming Deirdre's beauty as his to enjoy,
Of assaults on the House, of the House defended,
Of tumult of fighting, tumult of shouting,
The roaring of fires' fierce conflagrations,
Of the brothers at bay, the brothers taken,
Naisi captive, Naisi beheaded,
And grief upon Deirdre for evermore.

Long, long, long that grief.
Whether she lived a year or a day,
Died in the raw grave of the Sons of Usnach,
Or (as the older chronicler hath it)
Lived a year as the marble spouse
Of her captor Conor, the aged king,
Long, long, long her grief,
Ageless, endless; not till the world ends
Shall the hearts of men fail to remember
Deirdre and her deathless sorrow.

But this is the story's most tragic centre:
There is a moment, a poised, still moment,
Ere the life slips to annihilation,
The lovely thing slides to its certain destruction;
Beauty of love and beauty of lovers
Hangs in that moment of equilibrium
Between warm delight and the imminent doom.

O soul, ere thyself toppled down into chaos,
Fire, and slaughter, and dark disruption,
Didst thou not sit, as Deirdre and Naisi
Then at the apex of life (though thou knew it not)
Smiling and safe, in the house of thy joy?

Thus, thus, at the turn of their tragic story,
Lamplit, firelit, warm, befriended,
Innocent, happy, unwitting of menace,
In the House of the Red Branch
Deirdre and Naisi sat playing chess.

A. V. Stuart.

Scorpio Scorpioni

O STREAMING days no more to be,
Nights of enamelled brilliancy
When all the sea ran in my veins
And all the forests grew in me!

The jaguar's eye that sees in dark
The spiral scale-ascending lark
The winter pyramid of snow
Burned with the ether-questing spark.

And now the cave and the ice wall,
The smile that says nothing at all;
To dread and desire the open door,
To climb slowly for fear of fall;

The uneasy waiting, the taut wire
And to stand listless before desire;
To disown the drums with a word and a smile,
Mocking the urgency, mocking the fire.

And if I close the fires inside
The mask of petrifaction hide
The answering flame behind your fine
Lace and silver corselet, ride

Never the rolling storm again
My darling, the trumpet's throat of pain
Blares across night and the riding trees
But pours its scarlet for us in vain.

Inside the fortress of ice is warm
Sleep and a bed secure from harm,
Out-side the seven-folded wall
Rages the tiger, the blind storm.

But the voice of the storm is a challenge to dust
You say, which quivers because it must

And turns to the inapprehensible
Carte and tierce, the parry and thrust

Of dread that is dearer than safe retreat;
And the tarantella the drums beat
Is only the pulse of the blood, you say,
That vialled in ice yet knows the heat

Of passion constraint diminishes never;
And storm outside and inside fever
Run on a parallel course and nothing
Is changed by discourse, however clever.

True by discourse nothing will change,
Often words but disarrange
The harmony of the will and its shadow;
But Scorpio is a creature strange

And terrible too and loving his lair,
Speaking seldom and everywhere
Looks to his armour first and then
Comes out for what he may devour.

So you will listen and I shall speak
For the first time full measure, break
The ice wall and the glass vial,
Light one more fire on one more peak.

I love you. I have often said
That to the living and the dead
But never as now feared to say it;
Never with such a sense of dread

Lifted three syllables out of the mire,
The piled debris of dead desire,
Never yet knew, as now I know
That ice is the despot and rules fire.

Answer nothing—the words are said,
They mean much or little; overhead
Runs the race and the stream of being,
Under the long roots lie the dead.

For fire is a tempest and I shall leave it
And you perhaps a little grieve that
The great tide runs so swiftly,
Grieve a little, hardly believe it.

Two things there are in all weather,
Fire or storm, on grass or heather,
Or by the fire or in the cold
Two things that cannot live together:

Youth and age, fire and ice,
The opposite poles of the great device
Armorial of the universe,
The one and the six on the players' dice.

You throw your number and I throw mine,
We meet and part, the border line
Broken a moment is soon restored
And quiet in vial lies the wine.

But remember the hour when the rafter shook,
The averted eyes that dared not look,
The hour of the hardening of the heart,
The closing and sealing of the book.

Remember these as I remember
Watching a moment the darkening ember,
For memory is a kind of sun
And brings the snowdrop in December.

I see your spirit sealed in glass,
Constantly vainly seeking to pass
Out through the crystal into the sun
To lie naked on flowers and grass.

And mine in similar safe retreat
Less strongly with passing time will beat
Its wings against the unyielding ice
And find strange solace in defeat.

But there is love and love is strong,
My love, and will not do us wrong
If we can turn to him fearlessly
As birds turn heedlessly to song.

He may take in a moment the pale
Prisoner out of his coat of mail,
Write the solution in lines of fire
And answer the riddle where I fail.

T. W. Ramsey.

The Bowl of Spikenard

I DREAMED Him dead, and woke to find earth dark,
All memory of sound in silence swallowed,
No glimpse of light, of stargleam no least spark;
The moon her Master to the tomb had followed:
Dew was no more than water on the rose,
The burning core of the diamond was dun
With a little grey ash where the light-pulse glows,
And a sickness yawned in the east for the sun:

A mute sea slept the tiger-snake's coiled slumber,
Drowsed and deadly, jet on sable gleaming.
Yet waking with its horrors does outnumber
The nightmare dreads of sleep, the grief of dreaming,
For Death in stern fulfilment of blind duty
Has slain my Lord, and with Him all earth's beauty.

There is an hour, a moment, or a day
When ecstasy sustains, when ardour holds,
The far stars whirl, the planets dip and sway
And mortal heart Eternity enfolds:
And for that hour that moment, or that year
While wonder lasts, the miracle endures;
And then the heart relapses into fear,
Will's falcons stoop demurely to the lures
Of wealth and power, the soul succumbs to sense
And as a garment shabby and outgrown
The heart discards her love as impotence;
As folly scorns the rapture she has known.
Yet growing old she masters no more lore,
Than gold, men, states, or armour to adore.

Once I mounted on Beauty, the lissom, the silver-maned,
Leaving the reins loose on the golden bridle,
And then with the zenith of purpose and longing attained,
I kept the sun's latitude, tender, imperious, idle.
Enchanted I snuffed up the gold of the rose's scent,
And pale in the crystaline rose of the breaking day,
With reflex of my passion the stars themselves were spent:
Night with her lip atremble turned away
For I was akin to the day-wind, and white spacious dawning;
Suns were the light of my loving triumphant eyes
And sunshine lightened my bones: I was done with dark mourning
With mute Despair, and Loneliness that cries.
Not since those first loves out of Eden fell
Was Heaven so close, maid so remote from Hell.

That was the summer when I first saw John,
Clad in his sheep-skin, by cool Jordan dwelling;
His eyes chalcedony, his black hair shone
Like olives, blue and purple; and he telling
The spell-bound shepherds and the simple folk
How Paradise doth penitents receive:
And of Messiah, sin and death he spoke.
I from my litter could not but perceive
The tender mouth, the lithe and slender hands,
The way the winds caressed his olive cheeks,
And how the muscles crossed in rippling bands
Upon his hips, so scarce I heard him speak.
Out from my litter smilingly I leant—
He lashed me with the whiplash of contempt.

"Lass, will you tangle in your yellow tresses
The mind that Reason fashioned to reflect
Its own as mirrors into dark recesses
Cast back the light of sun? Shall Intellect
Forswear her parentage in wild embraces,
With conquest of the human heart achieve
Eternal peace? In bonds of silk and laces,
In perfumed cages mind and spirit grieve
The freedom that continues with the rose
That in the garden beauty doth employ
To leave the earth more lovely, and dispose
The heart to happiness, the mind to joy.
Maiden, the fiercest tyranny is still
The ghastly toll that sense exacts of will!"

Then in the arms of Roman, Jew and Greek
Upon the dark tide of the sea of sense
I drifted with the evil and the weak,
The vicious and the vain; no dark offence
That mind can plot or human passion dare
Did I eschew: hard by Lake Magdala
I built a palace white and debonnaire,
The shape of Israel's five-pointed star.
I was a name for frenzy and for lust
Upon the lips of Jew and Levantine,
And in my arras Roman daggers rust
Beside slim swords dainty with damascene.
In impious, unparagoned caresses
I choked mens' souls beneath my heavy tresses.

So till one morning, when a distant droning
That grew to uproar pierced my high white walls;
The sound of curses, cries of "Stoning! Stoning,
For the blasphemer!" whistles, jeers and calls.
I found myself among the milling mob,
And like those murderers caught up my stone—
Then from my belly one great retching sob
Tore like a spasm. Who stood there alone
Hands at His sides, head bent as though in thought?
Who as I watched raised up His head at last,
Muting that uproar, and as though twere naught,
Through those assembled would-be slayers passed,
And o, o, o—Whose eyes clear, undefiled,
Eyes like a blaze of stars, upon me smiled?

How often since that moment has the sand
Run through the glass? What days, or months are gone?
Small matter. Once, my spikenard-bowl in hand
And in my heart despair, I entered on
A banquet where the guests made merry all,
And poured the spikenard's savour on His head.

Whereat He smiled, "She doth this for my burial".
Then, then I saw His feet were hot and red
And swollen from long wayfaring; my hair unswathed
Prone upon the tesserae, in love and pride
His high-arched feet in contrite tears I bathed.
With what compassionate hands my eyes He dried,
And raised me up, is all my heart remembers :
And weeping, weeping—for my eyes are embers.

I dreamed Him dead. Woe! Torment waits on waking.
The fire despair lit has lost half its heat!
I know why I am here with day a-breaking
With spikenard in a bowl, a winding-sheet
Upon my arm. Yet how roll back the stone
That blocks the entrance, how draw off the guard
The High Priest set? I, woman and alone
With these frail hands roll back that stone? With marred
Grief-raddled face persuade Caiphas' men
To grant me entry? Jesu! None is here!
None save this gardener. "Tell me young man, when
When bore they hence my Master? Is He near?"
"Mary! Nay touch Me not I am risen and I go
Myself in Heaven, and my Five Wounds, To show" . . .

Lone, did I dream? Or did my deathly sadness
Call forth the Image of my murdered Lord
From the unlighted Tomb? Did madness
Speak words of tenderness? The door unshored!
And here, and here, th' anemones are bent,
Each one way, even now returning straight—
And all the garden heady with a scent—
None ever dreamed a perfume! Wait, oh wait—
How fiercely beats the heart when Peace
Returns unto his dwelling in a breast
That long believed him slain . . . O rich surcease
Of hope! Sleep Magdalene, take now your rest,
For Joy bounds racing back into the world
And Sin's proud banners in defeat are furled! *Geraldine Kalka Cash.*

Stones

MEN have been piling stones for so many years
On their own fairest work.
Down topples the slender pinnacle of prayer
In the dust of grinding death;
And the bones are the bones of the young,
Whose last cries shattered the morning
Though no one heard
In the blast of battle, the gunnery,
The diving planes.

The tombs of high-piled ruin
Confront us in the midnight hour
When the stars are clear with truth, and pity whispers:
"Who builds, and why?"

Were the buttercups less golden, and the Spring less divine,
And Autumn less a temple of purple pomps
Where the heart comes home to rest, by the altar's incense,
Were life less crowned by the sun, childhood less helpless,
Such things might matter only as a passing dream.

But pity speaks;
The voice of her grief is ageless,
Low as the nightingale's, but not as the nightingale's, joyous;
While the slings are held,
And Davids, enslaved by Goliaths of cynic power,
Slay one another, and slowly raise from their dust
This place of stones.

All this may be. The blossom
Glued in the mud of the prancing hooves of the onslaught,
The fledglings dead, agape as they thirsted and hungered,
Waiting their parents' return,
The horses lying in blood, sad eyes glazing:

Yet, over the blue of the distant plain,
Hangs a serene mist, gilded with sun. And a trumpet
Sounds, like a message. Stay, stay in stillness a moment
And hear it.
The call of a voice, above these smoking ruins, shrilling, over the wheatfields sounding,

Death in it, life embracing that death,
And, the sound moving through the lands where gardens and destruction mingle,
Sinks to the edge of the sea; the sea's murmur takes it,
Changes it, swings it high to the mighty heaven;
The vizor is lifted.

So the stones we builded
Crumble away,
Till Springtime returns, and Man on the breast of its greenery
Glints in a new delight, takes life to his heart,
To dwell with the ploughshare and grow with the valleys again.

Arthur W. Ball.

The ★ attached to certain titles indicates Highly Commended Premium Poems.

The Journey of Sydney Keyes

"Until you have crossed the desert and faced that fire
Love is an evil, a shaking of the hand,
A sick pain draining courage from the heart."

—*The Wilderness.*

SYDNEY KEYES died near Tunis in 1943, at the age of twenty, leaving behind a little more than a hundred poems. They were all written between 1938 and his death, that is, between the ages of 15 and 20. For our present purpose we are concerned with only six of these poems which were written at fairly regular intervals during these years, and in each of which he dealt with the problem which most occupied his mind. Curiously enough, during the last three years of his life, Keyes wrote one of these leading poems each spring. In them, as the succession proceeds, we can see this basic question under consideration, one side extended at the expense of another ; extraneous elements gradually cleared ; sometimes a moment of precarious synthesis ; sometimes a bad muddle. At the end, in *The Wilderness* the balance was largely struck, the equation solved ; or solved for the moment. And since perhaps all personal equations can be solved only inside their own conditions of time and place, the poem came off and acquired a heightened significance from Keyes' death almost immediately after.

To state the problem in its simplest terms, for us, human beings, there are many things which clutch—love, personal relationships, our ties with the great dead. It is possible to pass the whole of our life in this enchanted lovers' garden. But if we do so we shall be evading the cardinal question—that we live for only a brief space between darkness and darkness, and must measure up our lives to a balance with this fatal and finite fact. We are all finally alone, and must, alone, face up to the idea of death. We must master the nightmare, "the waking moment", so as the more properly to assess life. We must go out, cross our personal desert, and, as the legendary Phoenix, be consumed so as to be born again.

This is the Apollonian (and the biblical) admonition. But I have thought it necessary to restate it simply, because most of us are so busy shoring up fragments against our ruins that we manage to ignore it. For Keyes, who was above all cosmic, it is ever present ; he was always concerned with the crux between finite and infinite ; between the spiritual and the eternal. He was at times perhaps over-serious ; at times naive, with the naivete of those who, in spite of the bitterness of our life, have kept their eye on the important things. For normal life, so called, Keyes was maladjusted (his childhood had done nothing to help him towards a "sensible" outlook). And the fact that he, at this time in history, was thus maladjusted, ensured that he presented in his poetry, with heightened appropriateness, this crucial problem of his generation. He was always a thinking poet, or more accurately, a perceptive poet. By that I mean that he was not consciously philosophic as Shelley tried so often to be, although he was certainly *saying* something ; nor, although he was almost sentimentally attracted to the magic of words, did he allow them to master the "perception" which he was trying to put across, as Swinburne so often did. His spiritual ancestor, if he must have one, was Keats.

One of his greatest qualities was that he assimilated well, that he focussed and balanced his material. And although he broke distinctly with the sociological

poetry of the thirties, he *was* well aware of being a child of the times. Auden's generation had had time to argue ; to consider detailed political processes for the staving-off of defeat ; to debate the technique of social improvement. They had time to be clever. Keyes and his friends had to jump ; they *knew* that very soon they would be in the infantry. That is perhaps the essential difference, and it is that which ensured that the spokesman of the period, whoever he was, would be intense and broody, a little humourless. I do not believe that Keyes, at any time, would have written "social" poetry; he just was not built that way. The interest lies in the fact that the times were ripe for a personal, a cosmic poet, and that they found it in Keyes. His "historic" interest for us is probably therefore almost as great as our interest in him personally. But it was definitely not good that Keyes should see himself as a significant figure in history. Now and again in fact, he did try to be a conscious spokesman of the period, and wrote bad poetry (see *Timoshenko*, a downright failure). Obviously, he was to work by implication. By the time of the *Foreign Gate* (spring, 1942), however, he had begun to realise his real purpose. At that time, in an article entitled *The Artist in Society* he stated that the function of the poet is "to give to his (the poet's) audience some inkling of the continual fusion of finite and infinite, spiritual and physical, which is our world . . . ."

But we are moving ahead of ourselves. The working out, the crystallization of this statement took over three years, and is painfully marked out in the six crucial poems. Before reaching the clarity of the last statement, Keyes had to discard many angles of approach, and much useless emotional baggage. For a journey so important three or four years is nothing ; Keyes' perception advanced amazingly rapidly, as did his technical ability to express it.

He had had a lonely and a sheltered childhood. Then in 1940 he went to Oxford. It may be that there the pleasure of communal friendship, of a few sensitive and sympathetic people, overbalanced his more natural loneliness. Certainly at this time, and especially in the first of his major poems *Remember your Lovers*, he exhibited a gregariousness of sensibility which he soon lost and which he *had* to lose before he could develop further. He was beginning to see, with fair clarity, the significant cross of his generation ; he thought at this time, or thought he thought, that the sensitive ones might carry their cross together. That feeling, together with his constant love of singing for its own sake, the fascination of liquids and long syllables, gives *Remember your Lovers* a melodic nostalgia which haunts. There is a primary delight in singing to and for the others to whom he felt himself allied :—

> " Young men walking the open streets
> of death's republic, remember your lovers.
> We led you out of terror tenderly
> And fooled you into peace with our soft words
> And gave you all we had and let you die."

This then is March, 1940, and Keyes was clearly extroverting himself unnaturally. He hoped to face the main facts, but to do it with friends, living and dead. He was still not fully aware of the implications of what he had perceived ; that, more than the turning of the back, there must be a deliberate movement in a new direction, a journey. That fact he had seen by the following spring ; it needed still another year and another spring to realise that the journey would have to be taken alone.

But by the spring of 1941, he had realized that the journey must be faced, he had left for good the static conception. And at this time in *Advice for a Journey*,

since he still imagined that the journey might be taken in company with the others, since he thought that he might speak publicly for his generation *as a generation* rather than as individuals, he produced a peculiarly satisfying *war-poem*. By that I mean that in *Advice for a Journey* he achieved that suspect but attractive balance between herd and individual demands we so often require of the poet in war. It is, therefore, a particularly complete poem, if you don't look too far. It is a suspect synthesis, easy to swallow ; its themes clear and cathartic. It is, as we shall see, in all ways a much smaller poem than *The Wilderness* of 1943 ; it still says much less than the whole. But what there is is nicely balanced and well said. It is a clear-cut overture where *The Wilderness* is not a quite fully worked-out symphony. There is, as much as all else, the communal hope,

> "The drums mutter for war and soon we must begin
> To seek the country where they say that joy
> Springs flowerlike among the rocks, to win
> The fabulous golden mountain of our peace.
> O my friends, we are too young——"

In this poem, and remembering its precursors, we begin to recognise the stock Keyes images, the symbols of this joy-through-pain process ; the lovers deserted in their garden ; the hard journey and its magnetic attraction ; the agony of the frost, the ice and the steel, and the final consummation in fire. They are symbols rather than images and one must pay some apprenticeship to Keyes own masters to appreciate them. Luckily his debts, though heavy, are not scattered, and he acknowledged them frankly. In the draft M.S. of *The Wilderness* he wrote under the title, "I. M. Geoffrey Chaucer, George Darley, T. S. Eliot, *the other explorers*". He digested easily and deeply ; *The Golden Bough*, Yeats, especially in his Byzantine poems, Rilke, and the others mentioned above all became constituent parts of his dream. There is also a slight technical debt to the Auden group. Keyes himself, being selective in his assimilation, could not be academic or of a school. It is unlikely that a school will spring from him. He was very conscious of his masters, but they were *his* masters and a mixed lot.

It must have become evident by early 1942 that the problem was a bigger one than could be worked out in short, one-key poems like *Remember your Lovers* and *Advice for a Journey*. They were essential preliminaries since they approached the main question and indicated some methods by which, technically, it could be treated. (The other poems which Keyes wrote at this time helped only in his general technical development.) It was necessary, first of all, to go to greater length ; to state not simply the main theme but the subsidiaries ; to weave the whole together so as to produce not only a more comprehensive statement but a more honestly balanced, even if a less attractive, synthesis. And in March 1942 there appeared *The Foreign Gate*, which may be called with justice a draft of *The Wilderness*.

The first thing one notices about *The Foreign Gate* is that in it Keyes was still tied to the old embarrassments, the more sentimental extraneities. It is a last effort to make the journey in company, to offer and receive help, to keep heartening contacts. But here, for the first time he admitted that one's friends may let one down. The poem has therefore a slightly hysterical air about it, a final desperation, like that of a girl who is loathe to say the inevitable goodbyes to a lost lover :—

> "See, I have made you a bridge ; a trumpet
> You may shame silence with ; a slender dovecot——
> ——O my brothers

My shy bird-throated compeers—and my rapid
Talkers of youth, return.
Companion me.——"

It is a tortured poem, incompletely digested and lacking in balance ; it goes on too long. At times there are lovely passages, but of it generally one has to say that it was a working out of what was done much better the following year. Sometimes he neglects an important theme and wastes it ; sometimes he makes more than the structure of the poem will stand of a theme which was after all incidental and soon to be discarded. This is especially apparent in the long and moving passage on the great dead, beginning :—

"Were I to mount beyond the field
Of battle and the lovers' wood to that
High-pillared house
Where the great sit,——"

That section is complete in itself and stands out disjointedly from the lines around it. Keyes himself had not crossed the bridge yet. He was nerving himself for the crossing, and trying to persuade others, the sensitive ones, to come with him. He was soon to realise that he must go alone. Here he was clearly working towards that final separation, but it was painful and hard to face ;

"How could you give so much to death
Who never gave me anything at all ?" . . . .
Give back the days
Of love's high summer even ; .. ..
—— ; these things are not enough.
The lovers weep. There is no rest or pity.
—— there's no escape.
No ease at last, only the cold attraction
Of steel and magnet.——
"It is so hard to be alone
Continually watching the great stars march . . . ."

The *Foreign Gate,* then, is not under control, does not see clearly, is too cluttered with the debris of incidental pity. (We should remember, though, that Keyes was only 19 at this time, and had the honesty and clarity to call this poem, in a letter, "my nearest miss so far"). And indeed, now and again, and with unmistakeable promise, it does break out :—

"But help or hope is none till the circle be broken
Of wishing death and living time's compulsion,
Of wishing love and living love's destruction."

That seems to me to be Keyes speaking properly as himself for the first time. We have to wait one more year for a statement of equal economy which is at the same time more comprehensive. In the interval Keyes wrote only two poems touching on his main theme ; the one (*The War Poet*) is really little more than an often quoted press-cutting, as much instinct with Keyes' real struggle as a newspaper communique is of the physical battle. The other (*Moonlight Night on the Port*) is a documentary, a sensitively handled newsreel close-up.

Thus we come to the beginning of 1943 when Keyes was 20, and a subaltern in the West Kents. At this point he wrote *The Wilderness* which is, although one or two minor pieces were written later, essentially his last poem. In it Keyes faced, for the first time clearly, fully, and economically, this problem on which he had worked for so long. The thought is controlled as it was not in *The Foreign Gate* ; and, almost throughout, the speech matches the thought.

It possesses a significance, a historical aptness beyond itself ; because of that it is as much the poem of a decade as *The Waste Land* was.

It appears, from a draft which has remained, that he began by writing the poem, as he had written its predecessors, in the second person plural. Then, after three stanzas, he crossed out all the "you's" and substituted "I's". In fact, as the poem develops it becomes obvious that this time it could only have been written personally. But why the change after three stanzas ? Did Keyes realize only at this point and in the very progress of his last poem that he would, after all, have to go through alone ? The first stanza, as originally written, echoes very plainly the *Foreign Gate* and *Advice for a Journey*. It was amended, leaving

"The red rock wilderness
Shall be my dwelling place."

The decision had been made. Keyes had crossed the bar. The lovers were left in the garden ; the journey through the desert and to the phoenix bird must be a solitary one,

"I turn my face to the sun, remembering gardens
Planted by others—Longinus, Guillaume de Lorris
And all love's gardeners, in an early May.
O sing, small ancient bird, for I am going
Into the sun's garden, the red rock desert".

There is, it will be seen even from that fragment, a haunting sense of loss. During the first two of the five sections of the poem this nostalgia alternates almost equally with the statement of the argument. But so much has Keyes' technique improved that the nostalgia is made use of by being introduced in a lighter key from that in which the main statements are made ; in lyric quatrains as against blank verse. By this means the sense of loss is accentuated, and the lines given the childlike quality of a song heard a long way off,

"And all the poets of summer
Must lament another spirit's passing over,

(and then the key changes)

O never weep for me, my love,
Or seek me in this land :
But light a candle for my luck
And bear it in your hand."

One is greatly tempted to go on quoting at length. With the problem almost completely balanced, Keyes was able to bring off, for almost every aspect of it, a memorable phrase. The sheer tug of the pathos is agonising :—

"I say, Love is a wilderness and these bones
Proclaim no failure, but the death of youth."

The really important thing is that here, especially in the final section, Keyes felt himself in sight, in expressible sight, of a synthesis. The poetry has the lankness, the tensed bareness of the decision which it states :—

"We go now, but others must follow :
The rivers are drying, the trees are falling,
The red rock wilderness is calling.

And they will find who linger in the garden
The way of time is not a river but
A pilferer who will not ask their pardon."

It would be easy to make too much of this poem ; it gains so much from what

we know of the poet's life and of his death so soon after. It is sometimes sentimental, and in places strained. But it does exhibit an exceptional balance between youthful sentimentality and the romantic use of language. And it promises more than it gives ; it is a seminal poem. It gathers up all the previous promise and suggests quite clearly just what kind of poetry we might have had later, when the unnatural strain had eased. As it is, we will remember Keyes chiefly for that poem, together with one or two of its antecedents ; for his great seriousness and honesty, and for his significant death in history.

And so, a few weeks after writing *The Wilderness,* Keyes sailed for Africa ; and but a very few more weeks and he was dead. There is no doubt that for that journey he had prepared himself ; he had worked it out and reached a momentary assurance. He had been able, at the end, to make a clear statement :—

"Flesh is fire, frost and fire :
Flesh is fire in this wilderness of fire
Which is our dwelling."

RICHARD HOGGART.

To One Found Faithless

IN my most need when didst thou heed,
Or when bring respite to my pain?
Thou wast in truth a broken reed,
An echo, and thy promise vain.

Therefore without thee I will build
My Zion in a famish'd land.
Poor are my fields, and quite untill'd.
Brambles encumber them, and sand.

Thou aidless, will I rear God's fane.
My songs shall be to Him, not thee.
In sackcloth though thou come again,
Fawn thou on God, and not on me.

Half forty years, the wilderness
Hath known my travail and despair.
Dry Meribah may waters bless,
But not from me shalt thou have share.

False was thy word. Another friend
Lifted the chalice to my lips.
Go thou from me. There is an end.
Our bark was rigg'd in the eclipse.

False, false thy heart. A Marah thou.
Like Lot's wife, thou wast turn'd to salt.
Wither'd upon a Dead Sea's brow
Stand thou for aye. God keep thy fault!

T. E. Casson.

*Time And The Children**

THE children stand,
The children wait,
The children swing
On the garden-gate;
Autumn leans
Upon leaden sky,
The children shout
And the day goes by.

With falling years
They will remember,
These laurels, smoke,
This rain in November,
A wooden fence,
The old tap's leak,
The smell of fields,
The hide-and-seek.

Pass on the day,
Creep nearer night,
Tea-time awaits
With its kind lamp-light;
The children run
As the air blows colder,
The children laugh,
And the day grows older.

. . . . . .

The children stand
The children stare,
Ere they open the door
To the lamp's warm glare;
Caught for a moment
'Twixt out and in,
Between what's finished
And what's to begin.

The children stand . . .
But what are they?
(And who are those
That ran by day?)
They stand like silence
Hung in a bell,
Or water waiting
Deep in a well.

They part the moment,
They open the door,
The children stand
On the well-worn floor:

As I behold them
Now, I think
The children stand
By some ocean brink;
Were they to enter
I would know
The babe, the youth
And the grand-sire so.

One step forward,
And I should see
The child unfolded,
The man to be;
The ringing journey,
The home, the call,
The desperate challenge,
The lonely fall.

The children stand.
The hour swells high,
No longer heartlessly
Sweeping by;
How could I fancy
That children stood
These flowers of fire
So bright, so good?

They hover around
In rich, sweet life
Valued eternally,
Loved in strife;
(And how much of love
Is needed there,
Their present, future
And past to bear?)

The children stand . . .
By a clear-lit pool
Of benediction
Quiet and cool;
I may not come there,
For only they,
Children, child-like,
Know the way.

. . . . . .

They laugh, they mingle,
The hour ebbs low,
The children enter,
They pass, they go!

Alan Dane.

The Silver Birch Trees★

PUTNEY HEATH (EVENING)

OH that I were a painter and could catch
The magic and the wonder of this scene!
What words can daub a portrait that would match
This sylvan phantasy of grey and green?
What song can speak of mysteries unseen?
What wistful eyes can, drinking deep, confess
This is the fairy-land of things serene?—
This is the land where mortal thought grows less,
Where kindly spirits visit but to bless;
This is the spot where nymphs and pixies sing;
Where Hebe in her native loveliness
Still hears Alcides whisper: "It is Spring"!
See! All the forest is alive with light:
The soul of Swinburne smites the lips of night! *Arthur Row.*

The End of Summer★

TO-DAY there is a small, grey rain
And clouds of ragged light. The trees
Bend to the temper of the wind.
The children shout and play and seize
The silver trumpet of the hours
For joy. Above the garden lies
The ruthless waterfall of time,
The endless washing of the skies.

Under the trees the shadows fall
In darkened pools, and fruit and leaf
Float on the grass. The sunflowers close
Their arrogance, and corn-gold sheaf
Lies still, disdainful, to the air
That has no rich or warming light.

I see against the silver sky
The cloaked form of approaching night
Walking in weeping mists. Decay
Shines like a coin, brassy, worn,
In curling edge of fading flower
And yellow leaves, bereft and torn.

The summer, like a vagabond
Is folding tent and pennon up.
Garish and old, she flings away
The crimson rose's chaliced cup
And drinks the frosted wind. The storms
Light the wild avenues I tread,
Down to the tunnels of the cold
Where lies the winter and its dead.

Marguerite Tudor Williams.

*Unicorn**

Fair, fabled one, who first beheld thee speed
through golden mist, o'er dewy rainbow mead?

* * * *

STATELY, she shone, calm Cynthia of the night,
while on a rock, once sun-kissed, still I lay.
Between me and an island, dipped in light,

dwindled the sleepy tide, led by her ray,
and on the shore, with gleaming pebbles strewn,
edged growing greenwoods, melting into grey.

Lo, then, high-stepping, whitely and alone,
came the strange creature—purity crystalline—
shaped like a doe, a colt, of ivory tone!

Quickened my heartbeats, faltering at the scene,
in wonder at the ferlie shewing there;
shining againt the massed and cloudy green

the tall fantastic horn rose in the air,
pearl-dappled hide its inward being veiled,
lissome each line and every movement rare.

Swooning delight my senses then assailed
as lambent hooves struck forth a silver fire,
and even Cynthia for a moment paled.

How stiff and glistening like to silken wire
on that royal neck up-arched the bushy mane!
The lustrous eyes were large with chaste desire,

the small proud head was tossed and tossed again,
and, as I closer looked, I saw some hand
had flung around the neck a princely chain.

Long tail a-stream it galloped on the strand,
beautiful, young, divinely fleet and free,
then by the swaying water took its stand,

played with the drowsy horses of the sea,
suddenly flexed wide nostrils, silverly neighed
and lightly ran across the sands to me.

* * * *

Thou never wert. Thou art a poet's dream
nurtured in ageless country of romance,
emblemed in Scotland, tapestried in France:—
Who thought of thee? Who captured first thy gleam?

* * * *

Waiting I sat, half-joyful, half-afraid,
sweet-breathing down it crouched beside me, mazed,
two silver hooves upon my lap were laid.

Felt never I so happy, nor so praised,
tender, triumphant, tremulous, content,
as one light hoof up to my lips I raised,

then on my eager breast its head was leant,
with loving looks and gentle courtly guise.
Mine arm around its jewelled neck I bent

and smoothed the satin sheen betwixt its eyes
with fingers fond . . . So sat we, interlaced
by peace, beneath the darkly wondering skies,

and as the dreamlike creature I embraced
its ivory horn entangled with my locks.
Cynthia forsook her calm and forth she chased,

that they might see, her hiding starry flocks,
and softest beams upon our converse shed
so we forgot the hardness of the rocks.

Alas, swift flew the night! And Cynthia fled.
Out from the shore had ebbed the slipping tide,
far as the island only sands outspread

wet, yellow carpet, stretching long and wide.
Our rueful silence parting did foretell;
slowly my fair one shook my clasp aside,

hooves ringing on the rocks a silver knell,
docile it rose as at a sure behest
caracoled there and whinnied a farewell,

stayed while once more the sleek neck I caressed,
I smiling to hide, under my eyelids, brood
of gathered tears, which saltly forward pressed.

A moment poised, the lovely being stood
plaintive amid the morning's coloured flight,
then plunged into the darkness of the wood.

* * * *

Thou art but some old wise imagining,
remaining yet a symbol fosterling,
a sign in nigh-forgotten heraldry
and when it passes so shall our country die.
Fair, fabled one, who then, as in a glass,
will see the vision fade and pass, forever pass?

Chris Ogilvie.

Beauty

OH, all the beauty of the world is mine.
Devotedly I stand and stare
In galleries of cold design
At beauty pensioned from the world's affray
In pitiless unloved array
Or high on some unhandled shelf.
But there is beauty everywhere
And there is beauty all the day
A loveliness of colour, form and line
Which sings, upon the listening air
Of Self.

Of Self, for beauty, so they say
Dwells in the palace of the seer's eye
And That which views all forms afar
Which made them even as they are
Is beautiful in stone or star
And does not die.

And does not die, and does not fade
Though forms dissolve and pass away.
When falls into the final shade
The cool incomparable rose
The heart of beauty will disclose
Another and another rose, and fill
The garden of the world with beauty still.

With beauty still, yet beauty none shall see.
To mortal eyes herself unknown
Only the splendour of her robe is shown,
Her robes which change eternally.
Her golden train which sweeps the sunlit corn,
Her starlit crown at midnight worn,
The jewelled air when day is born
These are the robes of royalty
And no man's own.

And no man's own. To all is beauty free,
Her scent and sound, her clear unending song.
The sun when clouds have passed away,
The laughter of a child at play,
Home, at the tired end of day,
These to the common wealth belong
And crave no fee.

And crave no fee, but as a lover well content
To see in all things his Beloved smile,
So we that walk this earth awhile,
Of lesser loves made innocent,
May worship everywhere, and in our love begin
To hear, as though some choral sacrament
The soft slow music of the heart within. *Christmas Humphreys.*

Frustration

WHEN all your songs are echoes, laughter flown,
The hour suppliant grown,
I crave the word,
Clear-cut like note of bird,
That shall communicate
Your spirit's white excitement or translate
Your overtones unheard;
I crave the austere word.

So far, so rare your sphere,
How should the slowly-falling word cleave clear
This denser air?
Then make me colour-wise
That through new-opened eyes
I learn, and rose and gold and sapphire be
An A.B.C;
Your softly-blending tints,
Dark silhouettes with which earth deftly prints
The sky's light page,
These I would learn to spell
And so read well—
Given an after-world, a timeless age.
It seems, from where I stand,
My out-flung hand
Could gather roses from your firmament,
With ease present
The bouquet, bud-impearled,
To all the colour-lovers of the world—
Vanishing roses these,
So now I wreathe forget-me-nots to please
A distant friend—
These fading, near day's end
In a cool lane,
I link, just for myself, a daisy-chain.

Jane Scott Parsons.

Sonnet Completed in the Sunken Garden of the Oratory School

SHALL we content our souls in idleness,
And fashion drowsy days with taskless hands?
How nobly still the fairest mountain stands!
And doth that stillness make its beauty less.
How patiently unmoving waters dress
Their cool depths with the spoils of fairy-lands,
While on their gleaming surface there expands
The pale flame of a lily's loveliness.
Thus could we end ourselves and live at ease,
When we have formed all glory that we may,
And when upon the breast of our Beloved
The last gem glows, and 'neath eternal trees
We lie at rest with never word to say
Or word to hear—unmoving and unmoved.

Moore Pim.

Chiaroscuro

SHALL I forget it? No, not anywhere . . .
See here on emptiness I sketch your face—
Grave eyes in sunken sockets, honey hair
Spilling with dreams from a steep forehead; trace
Once more your image on this tropic air:
Limn yet again the legend of your grace,
Girl against April, the wild iris there . . .
And dew and sunlight and a morning's space.

For now at Chamonix behind you rears
Grey glacial rock, and your grey eyes I see
Gauging new depths till distance disappears—
O memory! past loveliness and tears
Into that chasm dark as death might be—
All Carolina springtime lost in years.

Greenbelt, Maryland. *Margaret Beaufort.*

To W. W.

HER beauty, lake-like, shines serene,
The mirror of her mind.
In her reflections, as her mien,
Are Heaven and Earth entwined.
The charms that, thus, so much impress,
Are yet the lesser part.
Concealed 'neath her cool loveliness,
There is deep warmth of heart. *Howard Parsons.*

*Beyond The Rim**

WHEN to the shades you go at last
With love but half fulfilled,
How shall you find your love again
When he is also willed
To the grey hush and mystery
After the storm is stilled?

For oceans swept between you when
Land writhed with death and clash
New elements amazed the skies,
Pursuing with a lash
Of flame and steel two humans who
Had struck the vital flash.

Oh, blind are you with doubting thought,
Immortal, faint of heart;
Can you not see beyond the rim
Another rainbot start?
The essence, soul to soul, will merge
Though dust lies far apart. *Odette Tchernine.*

They Come Reluctantly★

THEY come reluctantly,
Remember that, you Seraphim who wait
To let them in. Not like the old, the ill
Who want to rest. The tides of life run strong
Within them still.

They will not want to wear
Immortal laurels on their brow. They'll want
Insignia of their rank down here. I know
You'll let them wear upon their dazzling robes
Their tattered medal row.

They will come listening still
Thinking they hear the tracer bullets' whine.
Too long for them the sky has spurted blood:
The quietness of your golden streets will seem
Shot through with fire and flood.

They will look back to watch
Wings crucified against a cone of light,
And stare once more into that final burst
Of shell. Let not celestial sun shine down
Into their eyes at first!

The rapture and release
You offer them they will not want, I say,
Their spirit answering still to the sharp sound
Of flak. They will not care their bodies lie
Each shot, or burnt, or drowned.

O little Seraphim
Who wait to greet the crews, look not nor speak
Too soon to them but leave them quite alone,
Then presently you'll see them, man by man,
Kneel down before the Throne. *Cynthia R. Palmer.*

And May You Pause . . .

AND may you pause before you come to God
The way of temples and of golden hymns
And sunlight stained to richness. May you pause
Before you come serenely thus to God.
And may you seek the hands of little winds;
And may you find the footsteps of the rain;
Slow evenings; and the bodies of frail stars
Half-drowned in winter streams. And may you go
The way of secret lovers, heavily;
The way of quiet people and of pain—
And may you come thus covertly to God. *N. Bowden.*

Not Daffodils

DAFFODILS once a poet's heart
Set dancing with them in the breeze—
To-day, I felt the magic art
Of simpler blossoms still than these.

There's something in my garden grows,
No artist paints, no poets sing;
Yet, from its golden trumpet blows
The very clarion-call of Spring.

Beauty is throned where'er it will
Heedless of scheduled place and hour—
And I, who had no daffodil,
Have found it in a pumpkin flower.

A golden blossom, wet with dew,
Through whose bright halls the urgent bees,
Six at a time, can rove, to woo
Its unexploited mysteries.

It opened but an hour ago,
It will not see another sun;
Yet, with the curious bees, I know
A baby pumpkin has begun.

Like them, I sense a future store,
And so my heart with pleasure fills;
Beauty is here, and something more,
Not found in golden daffodils.

I float aloft on rosy cloud,
For, all at once, in jocund mood,
I see a host, a gathered crowd
Of pumpkins for to-morrow's food.

J. S. Cox.

The Starry Field

NOW stands the door of heaven wide
And earth renews her ancient dream;
To cleanse the winter-wasted stream
Flows forth again the healing tide.

Entranced I tread the grassy way
Whose glory burns around my feet,
For here the stars and planets meet
To build them homes of earthly clay.

Unseen, unheard, unknown they came—
The Thegns of God, who work His will—
With their supernal strength to fill
Water and dust and air and flame.

Beside the pool there grows a tree,
Where beauty shines supremely bright;
My fingers feel her leafy light;
Her green and silver gown I see.

Loud sings the starry-throated thrush
To all the stars that blossom near.
The constellations dancing here
My hand may hold, my foot may crush.

The strength that moulds and sways the sun
With gleaming thoughts hath strewn the field;
Glory in meekness, new-revealed,
Wisdom and loveliness are one.

In form diverse, in hue divine,
The mingled tongues of godhead speak;
Here is the kingdom all men seek;
Here is the earth a holy shrine.

Aloof, the undying spirit hears
The voice of them who dwell apart;
Who build, but not with human art;
Who sing, but not to mortal ears. *Marjorie J. Martyn.*

Will There Be Laughter ?★

WILL there be laughter in Paradise?
Bell-notes that chime, and that climb in a rising crescendo,
To ring out a peal from the high roofs of Heaven?
Do the lips of the angels curve into music,
Arpeggios, pitched beyond human hearing?
Will a cherub interpret its bliss with a chuckle,
And saints wear their sanctity gaily, unfearing?

Will there be laughter in Paradise?
Bell-notes that sing, and that cling to the spires of Eternity,
Laughter released with the joy of the spirit;
Not noises satirical, shrill, or discordant,
Glee at misfortune, guffaw at the jester,
Nor the composite uproar, seasoned with malice,
Humanity's humour, the gibe and the fester.

Will there be laughter in Paradise?
Bell-notes that trill, and that fill the unlimited spaces,
Bubbles of sound from the wells of the Infinite,
Bright coloured symphonies bursting and scattering.
Will laughter be reaped from the sorrows of living,
And the ribs of Solemnity quiver in greeting?
Will laughter be part of celestial forgiving? *Juanita Peirse.*

No Echoes

NO echoes from the star-pricked roof
beneath whose arch a twisting stage
rings with the poignant cries of those
who live in conflict with the age.
No encores for the martyred men,
no curtains when dead actors rise;
only the silent witnesses
to lacerate our clouding skies
with offers of enchantment
to disenchanted eyes.

Stockport. *Edmund Cooper.*

March Storm

THE lady with lorgnette and purple knitting.
Is hurling titles with unconscious ease
Upon her poor relation, who is sitting
With red, untidy hands on bony knees.
Outside the nightwind soughs through surly trees.

The General enters, leaning on two sticks.
He stares reproachfully about the room,
As if again his memory plays him tricks,
And for the moment, young men march to doom
Not to the cannon's but the sea's dull boom.

The boy is listening for the coming gale,
The voices distant, while his thin, brown hands
Turn idly pages of an ancient tale
Of wonders worked of old in far-off lands.
Dreaming, he hears the sea and understands.

A tremulous voice upstairs is calling "Betty".
Downstairs, a "Yes, ma'am" answers sullenly.
Outside, that paddling centipede, the jetty,
Bound for escape from talk of you and me,
Crawls desparately to meet the rising sea.

"Some Bridge?" "I can't remember cards", "A cup
Of tea, my love?" "And dear Lord William said . . ."
Then suddenly the talk is gathered up
By the March storm, whose thunder overhead
Sounds like God's laughter sending them to bed.

Some will retire with bottle and with book,
To hug against unlikely theft, thin knees;
And some to dream. The boy steals out to look
Wide-eyed upon the anger of the seas,
To hear the fall of friendly centuries.

Dunkirk, near Faversham, Kent. *John Pudsey Wright.*

The Tryst

THROUGH the keen-scented woods he came,
Through the young evening's splendour,
Swiftly he came with yearning hands
And his eyes tender.

Laid on my breasts the hands I loved,
Nor did I shrink before them,
I, who had known no man before,
Did not abhor them.

Deep in the undergrowth we strayed,
Seeking the green protection
Lent to our manifold desires
By trees' perfection.

Under the honeysuckle arch,
Over the careless bramble—
Then in the shade our love began
Without preamble.

Have I said love? He loved me not.
All my devotion wronging,
Knowledge was but to him the spur
To urge his longing.

Now he is gone to play his part.
Torn from the lure of folly,
Strewn is my path with memories:
Bracken and holly.

Cover the past with lavender,
Store it where dust runs through it.
Let only sighs escape it soon
And tears bedew it.

Olwyn Pogmore

In *Lords of Life* Derek Gilpin Barnes presents a remarkably individual anthology (Rich and Cowan 15s. od.). He claims that every poem included gives him some measure of delight and is distinguished by originality of thought, freshness of experience or happiness in expression which lifts it from the level of pleasant verse and makes it in some degree "poetry", with which we can agree. This collection of animal poetry of the last 50 years justifies this claim and sets up a particular standard of its own, Mr. Barnes not being concerned with sentimental pet poems, but with poems that present an objective approach to the animal kingdom which affords man a last and vanishing glimpse of life as it was—simple ruthless, instinctive, but never hopeless and always without regret. This attitude while being severely limited, does enable the compiler to provide versified knowledge of natural history and unhuman independencies, the penetrative poets placing themselves in the environment and experiences of their subjects. One of the best examples of this is THE POETRY REVIEW *Ode to the Nightjar* by Wallace B. Nichols. Kathleen Gardiner's apt engravings enhance the pleasure of a novel anthology.

Poets and Pretenders

PERENNIAL is a good word for Oliver St. John Gogarty and his choice of it for his new book (Constable 7/6) happy. Written always with an easy prosodic competence, as is inevitable, it yet does not everywhere aspire to lofty poetic heights. But even where it does not, his idle verses of happy idle moments have all the charm which a love for his fellows and a finished technique can give them. We dwell perhaps upon this technical aspect unnecessarily in the case of Mr. Gogarty but, indeed, he does not in the least surprise us by any new virtuosity. We expected precisely what we have and yet, in this age and day, we are as delighted with these poems, done so well in a traditional manner, as if he were some sinner that repented of a modern perversity, instead of being what he is, a staunch upholder of the true faith. Our joy, however, is not so surprising perhaps as it may seem, for there are some quite respectable apologists for the formless and the cerebral, and these are the most dangerous, because oblique, enemies of the old, natural rhythmic forms, and we delight therefore in every ally. That Mr. Gogarty says nothing new (and how could he?) is no good reason why he should say the oft-said in an ugly way; or why he should not find new images and expression; and by the quality of this latest work he disposes entirely of the modern irrelevance that new forms and new meanings may be achieved only by incoherence.

It might be relevant in us now to come closer to our task. Many and various are the poems to be considered. There is however one quality in them all which is natural enough to the years of their creator, a musing, philosophic quality, which contrives to mingle the objective with the subjective in a manner which is quite entrancing sometimes in its suddenly pictorial effect. He can and does observe and describe Nature beautifully but sees in such things only a bait to lure the attention of a deeper vision in his own depths.

> " . . . . . .
> Where, by the lake's tree sheltered shores,
> Stem-anchored floats a fleet of flowers,
> I fold the oars along the boat
> To lean and, like you, dream and float."

He knows that if we are to see with his eyes and share his pleasures we must make his close acquaintance and watch his ways, a simple logical truth which is not nearly so generally accepted as might be supposed. Possibly this may be accounted for by some fear of incurring criticism for that egotism with which we are all endowed in some measure. We have never understood, however, why this natural human attribute should be condemned in a poet, even by the thoughtless. It is certain that in all significant aspects men are identical extensions of the mass of humanity, and whether, as some believe, they are born equal, or whether, as may be demonstrated, life treats them unequally, it does not alter the fact that fundamentally they are alike as peas. Therefore the intrusion of oneself into a poem is both necessary and right and has surely a universal application. And this is true, too, of what is called the personal poem, that is one concerned with an individual joy or grief. These things are common to everyone, differing not at all in their nature, and yet they are often, though erroneously, considered not to be fit for universal consumption. But Mr. Gogarty shows us himself quite freely and offers us poems about his friends which, personal though they are, are as full of significance for us as if we had shared the friendships. A book, this, of ripe quality, quiet, unpretentious and satisfying, and full of a simple wisdom which is offered to us with such concomitant beauty that even the perverse should be persuaded.

Egotism of the same unpersonal sort, lacking any taint whatever of the baser self, is conspicuous too in "Desert Wells" by Dorothy Wellesley (Michael Joseph 6/-). The same mixture, objective subjectivity, is there although presented differently, perhaps less observably than in Mr. Gogarty's manner, but giving Lady Dorothy's poems their own authentic quality of real poetry. That apparently unconscious power, or habit, of absorbing the exterior stimulus, to give out again the personal reaction interwoven with but taking precedence of the stimulus is, of course, the whole poetic art in its more fundamental sense. Dorothy Wellesley describes nothing she sees but discloses the external reasons for the thoughts and feelings inspired in her with a significance which mere description could never compass. That is because she constrains us to see with a subjective vision too and with this, the mind's eye, we see in a flash what might take whole stanzas to describe. It would be quite inaccurate however to give any impression that these are all nature poems. Many of them, indeed, were stimulated by more personal things and one, and not the best, by the dreary facts of science:

"On soft dark banks I count the primroses
Those drops of lucent life
Long dear, long intimate—
And how many light years from my comprehension?"

We can only hope that the author's joy in primroses was not qualified by her ignorance of so irrelevant a fact, but indeed such things, dragged in for effect, are not habitual with her. She is not really interested in the physical scaffoldings of the universe or impressed by its technical jargon and the poem from which this book takes its title is quite enough evidence of that fact. That is a typical thing, delicately but firmly woven, and quite free from those occasional slight violences of expression as of one searching for strength, which are so much weaker than restraint but which she does not always eschew. Here is the poem:

"Far have I travelled in lands where the wild barley
The wild corn,
And the wild briar the colour of fire
Bedizen the desert wells. There the light bubbles early,
Bells like spring water the sky filling;
Strangely I heard them babble, water and bells,
In the waste, in the desert, far in the desert forlorn,
Water like music, music like water welling."

We have waited a long time for another volume from John Buxton, whose last book we received in 1944. That book ("Such Liberty") was an unusual achievement, the nostalgic poetry of a prisoner of war, but so much more in its calm, almost dispassionate poignancy that we opened his new one "Atropos" (Macmillan 4/6) with pleasant anticipations. These were not disappointed and it is evident that the erstwhile P.O.W. was not unduly beholden to his circumstances for the beauty of his earlier work. Yet, the new freedom of his existence shows as clearly now in his poems as the former imprisonment did. Now we have a more triumphant note, more vigour and, of course, less poignancy; and if you prefer the latter you may not regard the present volume as an advance upon the old. We do, and not only because he exhibits a surer mastery of his art, especially in his sonnets, of which there are 19. It was in his handling of this form that we found some cause for criticism on the earlier occasion. Now he is at ease, and often a beautiful ease, with it.

The book is in five parts, the main portion occupied by the title poem. This is

a philosophical disquisition, in blank verse if occasionally faintly rhymed, upon the Earth its glories and its future, and is an impressive piece of work of some 350 lines in which the Author takes unimpeded flights of imagination, thought and speculation, revealing a philosophic insight which is both balanced and penetrating. But this kind of thing is truly valuable only if it be profound enough to plumb new depths. This Mr. Buxton has not done although he says what he has to say with an enviable distinction and force and does not forget that his first duty is to be a poet.

"Such was the present and the past, that seemed
An endless process leading—I did not ask
Whither it led, but thought a poet's task
Enough to record his dear delight
In such a world."

It is however with his sonnets that we are more concerned. Some of these are but sonnets in form—mere exercises in prosody—but Mr. Buxton can fan the flame when his subject moves him. One of them called "On Seeing the Sea for the First Time for Five Years" is worth quoting, for here his philosophic bent takes on a poignancy which makes the result not only beautiful but memorable for its packed significance.

"Not stained, nor scarred by all man's history;
Wholly indifferent; without pity or pride
For battles fought there, and a world defied,
Or drowned men flung ashore quite carelessly:—
This will not praise us for our victory,
Nor mock defeat, nor our quick moods deride,
But moon-driven for ever, by mechanic tide
Will sweep about these coasts still heedlessly,
And while I watch each sinuous movement there,
And see the opal colours shift and fade
Where the long waves plunge toward me, I am glad,
Yes, glad that the land's whole history is in the care
Of this unhistoried thing, never dismayed
By all that man has done that is evil, or cruel, or sad."

The particular may say that the majority of these lines do not scan with that severity of discipline demanded by Petrarch. Nevertheless it is a fine sonnet.

So much for three valuable traditional new books and, these being put aside, we discovered something of quite another sort—less balanced more conscious and with about as much subjectivity in it as a tank. We were fairly warned of the character of these poems by Mr. Alex. Comfort in a preface in which among other statements we were informed that the author, Kenneth Patchen, an American, whose book "Outlaw of the Lowest Planet" (Grey Walls Press 8/6) is in question, owes his stature entirely to the fact that he is a human being. This sort of meaningless nonsense is well enough, we suppose, as an introduction to such things as

"The sea unlocks a child's castle and an angel's
Eye: my father's blood runs through the whale . . ."

and when we were told further that "the author has brought the perfection of immediacy to a point at which . . . it is very like a blow" we can most willingly agree, for there can be few things more gratuitously painful than this sort of thing—

Eve of St. Anthony or The Middle Class was Sitting on its Fat.
"Man's dirt and stomachs that the sea unloads; rockets
of quick lice crawling inland, planting their damn flags,
putting their . . . . . [unprintable by us] . . . . . .
yapping bloody murder while they slice off each other's heads
spewing themselves around, priesting, whoring, lording
it over little guys, messing their pants, etc., etc."

Vulgarity of this kind is we suppose due to an obstinate fit of adolescent temper which refuses to put away the less savoury of its childish things and embellishes them with a sexual patina which is fortunately denied to the little ones. Anything possessing less immediacy it would be difficult to imagine than this perverted Peter Pannery. We can only hope that its regurgitation has benefited the author; it could not edify us, nor anyone in search of that delicacy of beauty which is poetry.

It is only fair to say that this is not the prevailing note of this selection of the author's work. Mr. Patchen is unconfined in his lawlessness and sometimes allows his imagination a whimsicality which while not resulting in poetry is not without its nonsensical charm. In a poem called, "The Village Tudda" he says,

"Plumbers sat on the meeting house roof
And fixed the pipes of heaven
So that it never rained on Tuesday
Which was held to be in bad taste,"

but we looked in vain for an unselfconscious musical outpouring of his spirit. Always he contrives to remember his desire to disturb, surprise or shock, to administer Mr. Comfort's comfortless blow. The poet, if he be one, has been submerged in deliberate artifice, and we are quite unable to believe that to any human being, of whatever "stature", his could be a natural mode of expression.

And now, having given blow for blow, so to speak, let us return peaceably to our native land, or to that part of it called Scotland. Mr. Maurice Lindsay has compiled an anthology of modern Scottish poetry (Faber, 6/-) by which he hopes to demonstrate a "remarkable" revival of poetry in Scotland during the last 25 years. The poems save for some 5 or 6 of them are all in English despite the editor's claim that they are in three tongues, but some are in that Scottish dialect in which there are some Gaelic words but also many English ones phonetically spelt to suggest a Scottish accent. We suppose there is some point in this obstinate cultivation of a Burns affectation; there is a beauty in it, if some irritation at the need for a glossary, and we wonder how many Scotsmen even could read this supposedly mother tongue without it. Why nationalise poetry, anyway, unless one has to? The anthology contains many contributors whose names are familiar and, beyond that convenience which all anthologies confer, we see little point in this volume. Perhaps the convenience is enough. We would make one observation about its contents, there are too many poems which exhibit a rather Freudian preoccupation with sex, a preoccupation adolescently anatomical, but in the main the poems are the usual mixture, assembled in that fashion, too popular with anthologers, to suit all tastes and every lack of it.

We are always ready to listen to that plea which, with a boundless faith, asks us for a criticism that the author may be encouraged. Then we try to be constructive even while we pull no punches; although it may be doubted that a combination of slaps and persuasion can be very convincing. A volume from Malta called "Adrift" by George Zammit (published locally by John Muscat),

comes with this plea, not from the author but from a third party, perhaps a friend, and we are glad to oblige. Mr. Zammit appears to us to bring to his work plenty of feeling and, writing humbly and unpretentiously, he gives an impression of sincerity which will always preserve him from our worst shafts. But he is weak technically and his poems abound in prosodic compromises, possibly the result of too little hard work in revision, because he lacks the knowledge that any technical difficulty can be overcome. To have that faith is to remove any mountainous difficulty and, although these will not vanish at a nod, their circumventing will have a surprising result in deepening and enlarging the poet's talent. While a weakness remains the poet should not rest, because only by this refusal to be satisfied will he develop to his own potential maximum. The poet must create himself by his own effort, and it is perhaps a tribute to the miracle of true art that in its practice a man may, by taking thought, actually succeed in adding that impossible foot to his stature.

We encourage Mr. Zammit to persevere. His problem, good versification, is behind him, let him secure his rear before advancing. But let him remember, too, that this is the least of the difficulties which beset the poet, because with his brain, alone, he may overcome it. The graver dangers are those of the spirit; pretension, ambition, vain-glory and the like. These he has not succumbed to and while he resists them he will prosper.

Walter N. Sinkinson who sends us a privately printed book called "The Battle of Britain" is the exact opposite technically of Mr. Zammit. Indeed we have no hesitation in calling his versification brilliant; so smoothly competent is it that he deserves special commendation for it. But, and it is a big but, he has not learned to restrain this glittering stream so that it may deepen and dream and reflect, and show us something more significant than sparkle. So much skill with words can be a misfortune unless distrusted. The wood can be lost in the trees; and words can come faster than feeling, so that the poem is finished long before emotion has had time to deepen and direct its course. It is inevitable thus that Mr. Sinkinson's verse is somewhat superficial on a strictly poetical valuation. As verse, that is, as a literary production, it is first rate.

It is not often that a privately published book of poems demonstrates its fitness for a wider public than is available to so limited an opportunity, but it does happen sometimes. Robert Burns is a case in point and immortality awaited him. Gopal N. Nilaver, whose book "Sudden Retrospect" was printed for him in Bangalore (by Hosali), is not another Burns and yet we find no cause to quarrel with the view expressed in the Introduction that had these poems been published in England they would have marched in very respectable company and far. There is a delicacy about them which is probably Oriental but yet the mode, the idiom, is English and challenges comparison with much that we applaud here to-day. Their lack, or difference, lies we think in their less robust character, in their unrebellious acceptance of life as something inevitable to be met with fatalism. This is an impression fostered by such things as the following stanzas culled from a longer poem called "Waiting" which sounds a note typical of most of this book—

"He awaited — He awaited
The blossoming of the flower; — While love went by singing;
But the bloom in the bud was dead, — But his heart had too long bled.
Nor was hope heralded — So love to dust was wed
By a dawn in the East. — And in dust found surcease."

Mr. Nilaver's work is certainly more subjective than that of most of his English

speaking contemporaries and bears the same forlorn but beautiful air that so much of Rilke's poetry does, but without its incomprehensibility. It exhibits too the same gentle allusiveness, refusing to see the necessity to thrust any lesson home, abhorring emphasis or literal expansiveness, but nevertheless achieving a delicate significance of meaning, not indeed inscrutable nor enigmatic, but provocative of further musing in the reader. The poem which follows, "Death" shows this general quality well.

"Death looked in,
Death looked into the cage
And found life weary with age.
Death beckoned,
Death beckoned to tired life
And called, for the hour was rife.
"But Life said 'Nay',
Life said 'Nay' to death
With pitiful miser breath.
Life stayed
Stayed in Life's prison-house
And threw crumbs to crows."

Whatever one may say of this kind of thing and whether one likes it or not it is impossible to regard it as anything but the product of an unpretending sincerity. It would be impossible to synthetize such things, and they remain the prerogative of a genuine spirit content with a spontaneous simplicity of expression.

Poems and Translations by M. K. Howorth (Fortune, 6/-) is interesting for both. The translations have preserved that appearance of freedom which is too often lacking in such things. Poetry is not amenable to a too literal treatment either in interpretation or translation and Mr. Howorth has done well. One of these renderings, "The Betrothal" dedicated to Picasso, from the French of G. Pollinaire is noteworthy for the fact that in spite of a considerable length it is almost completely innocent of punctuation. The first comma occurs about line 76 and leaves one wondering to what UnPiccasolike aberration the inconsistency was due. As for full-stops, or other irrelevancies, there are just two. Why? They do not ease the gratuitously unnecessary labour of perusal and we wonder why the translator did not exert his privilege of supplying so felt a want from his own literary competence.

Mr. Howorth's own poems are modern in form, and unrhymed, but many of them show great delicacy of feeling and expression, and exhibit a capacity for emotional response not we think often found in a modern idiom—

"Oh, dilettante
dragon-fly, were you aware
of being a spectre, evanescent
shimmer on the summer ripples,
freckle, a bead of glass on glittering rushes?"

He can, however, become much more modern, which is to say, his work can have as little apparent meaning as these post-war years themselves. In a poem "Rectangle", he says this—

"Here lies an old man in a windy bed
rattling a broken nutshell,
seeking the kernel which had withered
when skull was round and stubborn
once: he refused to fill
his penthouse brain with stakes
against this gusty future,
and now the draught blows thinly through his veins
rattling the latches of his teeth."

This looks to us about as conclusive as a Peace Conference and about as useful.

It is not an easy thing to arrive at an exact estimate of poetry written by an Oriental even when the English language is handled with a perfect competence. There is always that fundamental difference of outlook and approach which while not, of course, a matter for any regret is nevertheless distracting to the English critic. Thus in reading another Indian volume, "Selected Poems" by P. R. Raikini (Popular Book Depot, Bombay, 3/-) we were at once interested and excited by a point of view, and a mode of thought, which have little to do with poetry "qua" poetry but which still serve to obscure, if quite pleasantly, the real issue. Mr. Raikini's method is modern. He does not deal in rhyme and his rhythms are staccato and even brusque. He is also inclined to use scientific metaphors and sometimes, contextually, with references to things classical which may be quite impartially Greek, Roman or Indian.

One judgment can be made, however, with certainty and that is that these poems are strongly vibrant and stamped with a real individuality. The subjective quality is, as in most Indian work, paramount; it is, of course, this fact which emphasizes the difference between Indian poetry and our own. Not because our own is not subjective or as much so, but because it is only in the subjective realm that the fundamental difference between East and West can be realised fully. Men of different races only resemble one another objectively; the deeper one penetrates into the unconscious the greater seems the difference between them, for we discover their more instinctive characteristics which have not been modified by a too-widespread general culture. It is therefore with a mite of diffidence that we say that although we read this book with pleasure we were impressed by its poetic quality as a contribution to the store of poetry which is or should be a universal possession. Let us quote one short poem (*Question Across the Field*), which we think affords, in its confidently bold delicacy, its vague adequacy, a fair example of Mr. Raikini's muse.

"Long have I waited
My fond love,
Hundreds of miles
Have I heavily trodden
And three fine summers
Passed
In alien lands
Thinking of you, my love.

"To-night I lie
In the open field
With a sheet of stars about me
A loving caress of the blue
A wail of people
In the ditches
A pageant of fire and smoke
A shower of man-made lightning
Deadening thunder
More potent than God's.

How will you kiss me to-night,
My love,
Across the crimson horizon
How will you lull me to bed,
My love,
To an everlasting dreamless sleep?"

Editions Canto send us, not we hope as a typical example of occidental poetry, a book called *Lullaby for Man* by Arthur Ley. This volume at times brings near incoherency to almost a new height of inconsequence and gets off the mark in a poem dedicated to the poets who served as follows:—

"Getting the half-mark of pansy or, purposely assuming
An alien roughness, acclaim as a drinker of beer,
By onewise singing a way down the khaki morning,
Or by whoring, storing his lines for a later year."

Why is it, we wonder, that this sort of thing always goes a-whoring, whoever writes it? It is, of course, quite as sterile. But Mr. Ley can do better although too much of his work is formless in the modern way and he certainly relies far too much on mere diction and a certain facility for surprise and ambush, which he learned perhaps in the late conflict. He has wit and force however and in his more serious (or sober) moods gives promise of much better things.

Privately printed and published at 1 dollar, *Man and Nature*, by Jacob Hauser and Oscar Ruderman, has been sent to us by the authors. We hasten to correct the natural first impression that these poems were the fruit of an improbable collaboration. The volume is divided into two books, one by each poet, but in neither, we are afraid, is there much to praise, if there is little to condemn. There is small evidence anywhere of much beyond versification of a moderately skilful sort, the verse itself being too often superficial in thought and deficient in feeling. This is, of course, unavoidable in those who believe poetry to be mere description in rhyme, and who judge the result only by the felicity or otherwise of the phrasing. Poetry is not to be achieved by the conscious exercise of a merely literary art. And yet how attractive may be the literary approach. Where this is restrained and delicately perceptive it may deceive, with an undoubted pleasure in perusal, until the truth is revealed by the absence of that emotional disturbance which is poetry's prerogative. Eloquence if restrained and subtle makes an instant appeal to our feelings and if we are possessed by it for a little while, it is not to be discounted. The test is, however, as many good judges have discovered, in memorability. If the impression is indelible the proof is positive.

Meanjin Papers (*Winter*) and *Poetry*, a quarterly, both from Australia, prompted this digression. Both are full of fine writing, distinguished, restrained, eloquent and giving that impression of delicate sensuous perception which appear to identify the writers more closely with observed beauty than is natural to grosser humanity; and yet it all seems to end there. In saying this, of course, we but re-state the melancholy truth that there are no great poets nor poetry to-day but only a multitude of lesser voices, fit enough for our inattentive ears, but speaking with the tongues of men not angels and making no more than a short-lived echo for a little time. Yet we do not complain, nor do we fail in our welcome for all sincere, unselfconscious work. If, as some suppose, we are at the end of an era, when we have exhausted the possibilities of our present idiom, and are fumbling darkly for a new one with a fresher vision and expression, we may comfort ourselves. The fact that some of the fumbling is dark indeed may be ignored, with its shady results. Darkness is the opportunity of charlatans, but our Australian friends are seeking the light quite as humbly as anywhere else on this umbrageous planet and with a success which we may envy. So too, are other English-speaking communities. The Poetry Society of Georgia in their 1944-1945 Review afford the same evidence of sincere striving, in poems which are perhaps more often in the classical mode than those in the Australian publications just mentioned, but are as alive emotionally as anything which is published here, or elsewhere; and we congratulate a Society, not related to our own except by a common love, upon its distinguished membership.

We are often asked to notice privately printed books although our views upon this sort of thing have been expressed more than once. It is, as we have said, seldom that such things merit more than a word of encouragement for painstaking work. *Songs of a Rover*, by Jack Bramley, is no exception. The versification is good but the songs do not aspire to a poetic level and are merely graceful things with no real emotional appeal.

It is a most encouraging experience to receive a letter criticising my "pomposities", my "nauseating imaginative flights" in tones which do not quite outrage the rules of polite controversy. Such letters are almost a pleasure to answer, and I only regret that the length of my correspondent, Mr. Robert Johnson's jeremiad, precludes its insertion in this rationed, if irrational, journal. His animadversions are offered more in sorrow than in anger, and if I leave his more personal taunts unanswered, it is only because a mere denial of their truth has no hope of convincing him. But when he says, and here I quote, "it is not the duty of the critic to moralise, only to assess the poetic quality", I must protest in the strongest terms. My offence was that I had objected to what I termed a "false and sterile standpoint" which resulted "in a cry of defeatism and despair" and that, therefore, I could not regard the poems in question as poetry. The fallacy of my correspondent's limited critical view is surely patent. A poem is to me, and to most people, a thing of the spirit expressing an attitude or a message. The words, images, and what not, are the means by which that spiritual concept is expressed and made visible or emphasized. Or, if you like, the moral content of the poem is the edifice and the words the materials which compose it. But I am supposed only to remark upon the way in which the bricks are laid and not to regard at all the significance of the whole. Here we have the basic heresy which would make poetry a matter of literary expertness only—in short, the theory and practice of the Moderns in a nutshell; and I am glad to have been given the opportunity once more to attack it. For my correspondent is far indeed from understanding the fundamental issue. Thus he takes the strongest exception to my statement that poetry springs from the well of truth. He asserts that it can spring from anywhere. He does not realise that spiritually we are all much wiser (and truthful) than our vaunted intellects; and that unless our poem springs from the spirit where such truth as is in us dwells (or hides) it cannot be poetry, however craftily the words may be assembled. Moreover, he ought to know that even at that, true poetry is more likely to issue from strong souls, than weak ones, and that while opinions may differ on a mental level, they cannot upon the emotional plane. That is why the only criterion for poetic judgment is one's emotional response; and by emotion I do not mean anger or delight but a deeper response altogether—a spiritual contentment and satisfaction. If one is angered or irritated there is proof enough of cerebral composition, and that can never result in poetry.

II

To resume our proper vocation, that of attacking subversive literary futilities or praising the achievements of sincerity, we come to an interesting book by Henry Treece called "How I See Apocalypse" (Lindsay Drummond 8s. 6d.). This is a prose work, an examination of poetry in general and of some poets in particular, and is written in a lucid, readable and fairly objective manner which while betraying Mr. Treece's personal predilections, and quite properly, nevertheless escapes any blatancy of propaganda for this school or that while discussing them. He seems to us however to regard the literary aspect more than the poetic in his observations. What interests him appears to be as important as what excites or thrills and this is where we must take issue with him, for here is the fundamental difference between poetry and verse. Poetry is not merely an art it is a name given to that kind of versification which contains a spiritual life of its own and so has the power to touch the emotions of the reader. Mr. Treece does not sufficiently acknowledge this distinction. For him, any verse, if clever

enough, is poetry just as any painting is a picture, or any tune music, although he would readily distinguish between the good and the bad. The point is, of course, that poetry is something quite special, ranking with the inspired in both painting and music. It is perhaps unfortunate that those two sister arts have evolved no similarly distinctive word for their more spiritual manifestations, but have remained content to call such things masterpieces. This has quite certainly tended to obscure the matter and to confuse technique with inspiration. The most perfect technical skill will not breathe life into Galatea. That miracle is reserved for a combination of that skill and of some part of the immortal spirit of the artist.

The author is too much inclined to defend the allusive, the over-imaged incoherence of modern work. He asks "is a man's understanding limited by the words he can use? Are there subtleties of understanding and concept which defy words?". And answers himself with a rather dogmatic assertion that "it is a fundamental error to suppose that a poet is capable of translating all experience into a verbal equivalent". We disagree even more "fundamentally". His conclusion is quite true of the literary gent, but false of the poet. In fact Mr. Treece unwittingly puts his finger upon a vexed point with a nicety for which we are grateful. There is no subtlety or nuance of human understanding which lies beyond coherent expression when that is lit and inspired by a poet's spiritual power. There are many, indeed, beyond the grasp of man's intellect, but the subtleties of which the author speaks are not, of course, mental, although he talks of "understanding". Any intellectual subtlety can be expressed in coherent language by anyone skilled enough with words. It is the spiritual concept which defies the mere word-monger and must await the poet's clarifying tongue. Modern "poetry" is too evidently the product of an attempt to substitute for that inspired simplicity a bewildering hotch-potch of imagery, as though there could be any hope of success for such unco-ordinated flank attacks upon a citadel which cannot be stormed but will open its gates freely enough to sincerity.

We suppose there is no age in the history of letters so cursed with mere cleverness as this, perhaps because nowadays a living can be earned in any of the arts by mere skill. We suffer from our own mechanical advancement and there are too many publishers and printers now to keep busy, and earning their bread, for man's lagging spiritual capacity. So the doors are opened wide to any competent rubbish which good salesmanship and large advertisement can sell. The decline began with the industrial age and has accelerated with its ever more rapid development, until now we have come near to losing what critical faculties we ever possessed, and nearer still, apparently, to the point where we cannot accept the thought of man as an immortal spirit, but must regard him as merely an intelligent animal released from all restraints save those demanded by expediency.

It would be difficult in a short space to do justice to "Crazy Gaunt", a volume containing four dramatic sketches by G. Rostrevor Hamilton (Heineman 6s. od.) and perhaps we shall be justified in taking them rather upon a literary plane than upon the poetic. Mr. Hamilton's reputation as a poet is secure enough for him to make these excursions into literary or dramatic fields as he wishes and that he can do so with so much pleasure to his readers is excuse enough, if any be needed. The author's verse, blank verse, free verse and even his occasional lapses into prose, are all appropriate to his themes, and these are treated with an imaginative power, a delicacy of thought, which completed our enjoyment without those occasional flights into pure poetry which we came upon unaware

and always with a sense of effortless delight. Whether these playlets can be presented successfully we cannot judge, although one, *Senior & Co.*, has already been broadcast. They are certainly dramatic enough in their own unusual way, and we are sure they will be enjoyed by all who are fortunate enough to encounter them.

Feeble Folk by Mrs. Arthur Stallard (*Brighton Herald* 2s. 6d.) has been sent to us by the author. This is in some sort a history of England in verse, and concludes with an account of a fictitious, thwarted invasion by the Germans during the late war. This has been officially denied as mere rumour but apparently not to Mrs. Stallard's satisfaction. She may not, however, complain if we say that her poem inevitably suffers from what must seem to us to take a liberty with fact, for the dramatic effect which it might afford. The versification is competent throughout but the theme is treated sentimentally and from the usual standpoint of such work, that England is in some way a special favourite with the Almighty. We need perhaps say no more.

From the Chilterns by Theodora Roscoe (Ruislip Press 2s. 6d.) also sent us by its author is another book of verse, but not always competent technically. One receives too often an impression that things are dragged in by rhyme compulsion and that the author's sense of poetic form is not always proof against that necessity.

> "Across the fields and down the hill the hastening people pass
> With here a swaying side-car and there a staggering ass."

Mrs. Roscoe does not display much depth either of thought or emotion in these pieces, being content to describe the things she sees or loves with sympathy and affection. It can be placed to her credit however that she is sincere and prefers simplicity to pretension, and never seeks to impress by literary artifice.

A miscellany of prose and verse, we had almost said another miscellany, entitled *Middle East Anthology* (Lindsay Drummond 7s. 6d.) has been compiled by John Waller and Erik De Mauny. This strikes us as a little different from most in that it seems to have set itself no definite standard of quality but aimed only at giving a picture in miniature of life in war time in the Middle East. There is the usual note of sex, natural enough to the circumstances, but known as realism, a good deal of light-hearted youthful cynicism and quite a bit of serious prose and verse, not all of it good but with sufficient exceptions to ensure the book a welcome.

There are far too few books of humorous verse published nowadays, and they have been scarce in any. It would seem almost as though a keen sense of humour precludes the ability to write verse with that necessary perfection of finish which gives so much point to the joke, and the absence of which destroys it. *OG and other Ogres* by Reginald Reynolds, illustrated most appropriately by Quentin Crisp (Allen and Unwin 6s. od.) is certainly the exception to any such speculative rule, and is doubly welcome both for its rarity and its own excellence. The author's bent is satirical but he bludgeons nobody in his tilting at human folly, and off-hand we can think of nothing needing the sting of his ridicule with which he has not dealt, adequately and amusingly, in this book. He remains the master of his temper and his art no matter what provokes his ridicule and so his strokes are the more apt to convince the victim. One is quite persuaded in reading this book not only of the power of ridicule but also of the healing power of laughter from which all malice is absent. If only we all possessed a sense of humour like Mr. Reynolds' the world would be a Utopia from which pretension and other dangerous frauds would be banished, and we should blow

away (as the author tries to show us how) with one great gust of gigantic laughter, the vanities and stupidities of our time, and with them the monstrous human figures which publicity has bloated into the semblance of semi-divinity. Mr. Reynolds is no political partisan. His shafts puncture Sir Walter Citrine or Mr. Churchill impartially and he even finds an arrow for Mr. T. S. Eliot, but his assaults in the main are directed impersonally upon more important matters, the beliefs, shibboleths and shams of our rather shop-soiled civilisation. That is assuredly not the least valuable thing about this book. If you merely laugh and grow fat you will enjoy it, but if you can laugh and grow better you will bless it too.

But let us give no impression that Mr. Reynolds is too intent a debunker, however suavely witty. He can be, and is often, content with a lighter humour, as witness *The Happy Farmer* (after Sir Henry Wootton).

"How happy is he born and taught,
Whose pen is mightier than the plough,
Whose cubits grow by taking thought
With triplicates to milk the cow ;

Who gladly greets the morning mail
And indefatigably pleads
For rations (but without avail)
Sufficient for his modest needs ;

Who Ministries doth ever pray
More of their printed forms to send
And cheerfully doth pass the day
Seeking their sense to comprehend ;

Who finds the Civil Service mind
Congenial to his daily tasks
And calls that oligarchy kind
Which grants a little that he asks.

This farmer even understands
Pay-as-you-earn, with time to think ;
Lord of his schedules, not of lands,
He tills the soil with pen and ink."

If poetry be that sort of verse which arouses emotion in the reader, and we have often asserted that it is, it becomes difficult to exclude humorous verse of this quality from the higher classification. Amusement is assuredly an emotion ; and if the fuse which explodes our laughter is intellectual, it may be that man was intended to be happy and provision was deliberately made for a close intimacy between his mind and this merry emotional responsiveness. Which may support the view, widely held, that those lacking in a sense of humour are not completely human. Certainly this sense is necessary for a true balance in the human being for without it there can be no true self-appraisal, which is the greatest power humanity can possess.

There can be not even a speculative doubt however about the classification of *The Lamp* by Richard Church (Dent 6s. od.). Not that this is a humorous book, it is concerned with deeper matters and brings to their service a sensitive

profundity and a literary ease which result in a narrative poem of great beauty. The story of a young French girl during the German occupation is dramatically moving and Mr. Church is not afraid of those outmoded virtues of faith and love which are so shy-making to our obstinately adolescent moderns ; nor does he fail in that power, so peculiarly his, of adding embellishment, almost casually as it were, with image and epithet.

"The moon was drawing westward. Silver shone
The weir, firm and smooth, a polished bone,
A wall of water motionless as rock."

We are never far from the earth in this poem. The scene is never forgotten, indeed, it is integral with the story, its moods sympathetic with the narrative and serving the dual purpose of adding a personal poignancy to its incidental and yet endowing them with a richer, more universal significance. There is, however, nothing tritely theatrical about this scene shifting ; one does not notice it beyond the deepening in one's mind of the impression which is intended to be made. That is because there is no straining for undue effect, no violence of overstatement, but only the sufficient creation of an appropriate atmosphere.

"She saw her father so, a lonely figure
Ennobled by this selfless resignation,
This sacrifice even of his own honour
For one who would not plead with him to do it,
But sat alone, fighting her lost battle
And dying inwardly from wounds of grief.

No birds sang near the river : only the weir
Raving as a witless madman raves
Sunk in unremembered trouble. The moon
Went down, and darkness filtered through the stars.

So, as always in good poetry, is the literary virtuosity subdued and shackled to the service of the greater thing ; used only to enrich a melody which is heard by the heart.

Miss Melfin Jones, honourably known to us and to poetry lovers generally, has published another book, *These Things Remain* (Staples 5s. od.) after some ten years. Her previous book, *The Hour Glass,* published in 1936, attracted our attention and the author was kind enough to respond to the invitation which we made to her then, to read to us some of the poems it contained at our headquarters in London. Much of the present book, as might have been expected from the cataclysm which has intervened during the ten years, was inspired by war but Miss Jones was not absorbed entirely by so temporary, if tragic, a matter and there are many poems in this new volume which breathe a gentler air and tell of more significant things.

"The Winter wind blew thinly in the reeds
Beside Safaddan Lake. Three racing steeds,
Tuned to their rider's mood, grew tensely still
Trembling like echoes driven from hill to hill,"

and she voices the vast relief of us all from a dark obsession most fully with :

"Sing, lark, with glory on your wing,
Though you break your heart with beauty, sing !
Take our thanks to Heaven
For things hate cannot kill."

Miss Jones sings still with a simple joy in life in which she joins as an eager

participant and not at all as an " enfant terrible", an oracle or a pathological victim. Her Welsh hills inspire her to that humility which fills some hearts with song, and most with a solace which flows always and quite coherently from their immemorial beauty. She is content to speak her thought with a rhythm and grace learned from them and still exhibits a faith in simple statement which is unshaken in spite of some awful examples from the same surroundings.

"And song will be here after us—
That harp where dream and passion sweep,
Where sad or questing spirits cry
On strings that never sleep . . . . ."

We have been charmed and delighted often by Miss Jean Kenward whose book *Rain,* illustrated by Phillip Casse (Allen 1s. 6d.) is before us. There is a subtle delicacy about her work which is all her own, and remarkably apparent in a world where such individuality of expression is rare, with a difficulty of achievement which drives some despairing defeatists to gibberish. She will always be remembered by readers of this journal for her lovely sonnet *The Fool* which won a premium in this *Review.* It is included here under an altered title which seems to us less appropriate, but there is much else with the same elusive perfume and nothing better perhaps than the following poem, *Trout.*

"Delicate shuddering fish,
I can think of nothing more beautiful
Than yourself, elusively moving
Through the parted lips of the water.

The rushes welcome your body
With soft, inquisitive fingers
Moulding the bone, the sinew,
As a lover knows his beloved.

And the heart of the river, pounding
Drowsily like a tiger,
Rumples the wave in a flower
Petal over your shoulder.

Tremulous, quivering fish,
Nibbling the lilting ripples :
There is no star nor music
So lovely as your shadow."

This, the first poem in this little book, is no better than the last and does not exhibit more clearly that indefinable quality—a certain subtle freedom of thought and imagery—which sings everywhere in its pages. It is like a limpid stream of cool water in a thirsty land and as rare.

Shadows and Substance by C. Rufane Sanders (Stockwell 1s. 6d.) is a booklet with little of the latter quality but perhaps some promise of it. The poems are slight but it can be said of them that they are free from pretension and reveal a sensitive emotional approach to their themes which promises well for the author's future if he can continue to resist the all too prevalent temptation to indulge his ego.

Dynamics of American Poetry : CXV

Transfigured Night, by Byron Vazakas (Macmillan Company, New York City), comes to us highly recommended, notably by Wm. Carlos Williams, who writes the introduction. Quoting from it: "These poems pick up the thread where Whitman dropped it. Comprising a first book, they are remarkable enough to warrant the highest praise."

This poet is described as a "gentle-vitriolic, kind-inhuman, forgiving, obdurate. Born in New York City, his father was a linguist, scholar and writer, and through his mother Mr. Vazakas is a collateral descendant of Henry Clay". This writer introduces himself in his first poem in the volume "Art of Poetry":

Because everything is conceived in pain
Because man is born of violence and despair
Because everything is paid for
Because his arrival is heralded by coins
And coins deny the eyeball its stark gaze
Because the abortion that he might have been
Could have departed only in the nightmare
  of money passed
This is inscribed in the baldest outline
Where the natural functions cycle with the wheel
Of all that a man is or might be or was
When his ancestors, reduced to birth or death
Recognized in the shuddering butterfly of agony
The depravity of that divine animal, the sure thing

Made fearful by the auspice of a world
Made fearful by the menace of its end
Made fearful by an omen in a dream
Made fearful by the lack of means

If you have ever had to sit, reader, in a doctor's office, you may find "The Pre-eminence of the Medical" reminiscent:

In the ante-room, the chairs conveniently
  arranged solicit comfort for the
  uncomfortable patients, who shyly
  glance about and question each other's

Ailment. The magazines on the centred
  table offer vicarious holidays, comment
  on the news, or cheerfully instruct.
  But anatomy is forbidden, and the

Morbid avoided; even the wallpaper and
  upholstery conspire to make a death
  untenable. Yet anxiety mocks the
  explicit Colonial detail; and the blood

Pulses against the shut door where a diagnosis
  will disclose an unpersuaded view of
  things. One by one the patients disappear
  into the inner office, and curiosity

Subsides like a draft. Examination is
anticipated and the fatal words reviewed,
that somehow will never be uttered until
the words are unheard or the hearing

Indifferent. When my turn comes, I find no
continuing assurance, but only the past
to live upon. The clinical cleanliness
of the consulting room reflects the

Future in its penultimate face, like the
shining instruments that frighten and
observe. The doctor listens and prescribes,
But until the time when he admits

That the criminal are sick, and the sick
are mostly nervous, each in turn, like
me, will rise and self-consciously depart
with his incurable heart's unequal loneliness.

A Creed for Darkness (Wings Press, New York, N.Y.), is a second book from the pen of Walter Blackston, Jr., whose earlier volume, *Quest for Beauty*, was commended by the Springfield *Republican* as a work "of which most poets, for craftsmanship and content, might be proud". Turning the pages, let us pause to read "The Pilot":

But not again—
No walking on a spring evening;
No breathing of lilacs
Like thick musk. Forever there will be
The dream-house untenanted,
The dream-hour unfulfilled,
And the lover unclaimed.

These are not his words
But the poet's. With awful sanity
He remembered only a mission at dawn—
A task of steel and flame and courage
Among the fading stars.

In another vein Mr. Blackston writes "Evolution in Romance":

Once summer was a magic alcohol
That drenched their minds and turned the
commonplace
To paradise; her words were symphonies,
And his were petals falling from a face.

The drowsy afternoons were harmonies
Like rainfall on a patch of curling fern;
But hungering for books, they read, grew wise . . .
Now she is prim, and he is very stern.

Dr. Powell Spring's tireless and brilliant search after the final truth—and finding many shining truths upon the way—was mentioned in the November-December *Poetry Review*, 1945. He writes me now from Montreau, Switzerland, where he is finishing two new volumes of importance.

We are looking to-day through his latest book, *The Steep Ascent*. It is no paltry volume of some 50 pages—which is usually the case, to-day, of the books we receive for review—but of 140 full pages

Of the first poem, "Youth", we give three stanzas:

There is a time men often put away
A buoyant time—the poet calls it Youth,
When every fibre of man's inmost Self
Is vibrant with impatient search for truth.

Truth is the Golden Fleece we all must seek
And though it leads through error and defeat
We all have ventured outward on this quest
Some with insistence, some with measured feet.

The souls of men are born and soon move on,
The body must release the deathless spark.
Wise men are rare—they tarry to be born—
Whose cosmic candles burning pierce the dark.

Very optimistic is Dr. Spring's view of the Future in "The Fog":

I fear the fog that creeps about the crags
Or lies on field and meadow in the morn
Far denser lies the fog beyond the grave
The fog of days before the soul was born.

But I can see the road before me now
What need is there for trouble or concern?
Each step is clear that I must tread to-day,
As each will be at every future turn.

Again we pause at "Thought":

How often, Master, have I died
From earth's domain to Thine,
How often, purified, returned
To savour earthly wine.

I've slept on Egypt's burning sands
I've dreamed in Babylon
I trod the street that saw the cross
The Saviour hung upon.

My nostrils knew in catacombs
Dank odors reeking death,
At heathen altars I have prayed
To find the shibboleth.

I well knew darkest centuries

Where men were slain for faith,
I rode between high canyon walls
With skeletons——and death.

Wherever man was on the march
And thought outgrew belief
My mind was King in Avalon,
The wide world was my fief.

Forever life is fraught with din
Of creed that wrestles creed,
Will someday man come home to truth
And wean his soul from speed?

I am sure that the reader has found, in such abbreviated poems as it has been possible to give, a courageous pen giving us beauty and hope.

North and South, by Elizabeth Bishop, is a book that out of more than 800 poetry manuscripts submitted to Houghton Mifflin Company's poetry prize fellowship contest in 1945 won the unanimous and enthusiastic selection of the three judges. Miss Bishop's poetry first appeared in 1935 in an important anthology of poetry. She is credited with being a poet possessing high ironic intelligence and verbal magic and subtle melody. Turning the pages we stop at "Paris, 7 a.m." to sample this fortunate poet:

I make a trip to each clock in the apartment:
some hands point histrionically one way
and some point others, from the ignorant faces.
Time is an Etoile; the hours diverge
so much that days are journeys round the suburbs,
circles surrounding stars, overlapping circles.
The short, half-tone scale of winter weathers
is a spread pigeon's wing.
Winter lives under a pigeon's wing, a dead wing with
damp feathers.

All of these poems are of such length that we cannot give one in its entirety. "Little Exercise" strikes one's attention:

Think of the storm roaming the sky uneasily
like a dog looking for a place to sleep in,
listen to it growling.

Think how they must look now, the mangrove keys
lying out there unresponsive to the lightning
in dark, coarse-fibred families,

where occasionally a heron may undo his head,
shake up his feathers, make an uncertain comment
when the surrounding water shines.

Think of the boulevard and the little palm trees
all stuck in rows, suddenly revealed
as fistfuls of limp fish-skeletons.

It is raining there. The boulevard
and its broken sidewalks with weeds in every crack,
are relieved to be wet, the sea to be freshened.

The author of *The Mountain of the Sleeping Maiden* (Wings Press, California), is the editor of the Wings Press, Mill Valley, California, a leading American reviewer and a greatly appreciated *Poetry Review* contributor. There must be great satisfaction in being the editor of so good a press as this.

San Francisco is the birthplace of Mr. Stanton A. Coblentz, who was born 1896, and from 1920 was poetry editor in the most important newspapers in New York. The call of his native state in 1938 carried him back to San Francisco. We have in this volume more than a hundred short poems never before gathered together in book form; sonnets, lyrics, ballads, etc., almost all reprinted from various periodicals.

I have the pleasure of knowing Mr. Coblentz and his delightful wife, who have been here many times to dinner, and am glad to have this book. May I say that the title seems very stupid? The poem, "The Mountain of the Sleeping Maiden", comprises the last ten pages, but the title does not attract.

Mr. Coblentz is an accomplished poet—and a gentleman,—which never hurts a man's poetry. We pause at a poem entitled "Ascent":

Tired of news of raids and sabred men,
Of fawning diplomats and ravaged states,
O climb among my green-domed hills again,
Whose valleys harbor neither lusts nor hates.

Steadfast as men so rarely are, the peaks
Surmount me bushy-flanked and boulder-crowned;
The cow-bells tinkle, and the forest speaks
Only the wind-harp's low perpetual sound.

And musing here, where the black vultures wheel
Under warm skies, I could be half resigned
To grow, a happy tree, that need not feel
Sorrow nor shame nor pity for its kind.

A shorter poem, called "Actors", follows, and I will say at once that Mr. Coblentz is no pessimist:

Clasped in a warm illusion, we behold
The rainbow globes of glory, love, acclaim
And, stalking through the painted scenes, are told
Life's phantom fires are in actual flame.

But when the act is over, in the wings
The chill airs breathe; we face the granite day.
And then we see that all life's tumult springs
Out of the warm illusions of the play.

The next poem that I ask you to read is "While Diplomats Debate". Who in the world has not suffered from diplomats' debates? There is in America much faith placed in the business man—so what!?

There comes a moment, on a ridge of time,

When history pauses at a vast divide
Where, crest on crest, the frosty ranges climb
And, deep on deep, the misted canyons hide.
And tribes and nations, with their ghostly freight
Of generations and of towers and ships,
Halt where a step, a gesture may dictate
Their rise to summits or their gray eclipse.

Sceptered Assyria, Pharoah's templed land,
High-pillared Greece, and Rome's red arrogant might,
Each for one breathless instant seemed to stand
Sheer on the verge, then dipped and passed from sight;
While now still wider empires poise between
The far white pinnacles and black ravine.

You have in reading these poems gathered the splendid personality of Stanton Coblentz. If you haven't, there's nothing more I can do about it.

Those who seek to know the truth about "the other fellow" will be very grateful to Alvin Kronacher who gives us this monograph about a great man, poet and painter, etc.—*Fritz von Unruh* (Rudolf Schick). It carries an introduction by Albert Einstein who writes:

"Dr. Kronacher brings to the notice of the American public the importance and worth of the poet, Fritz von Unruh. Perhaps some will think", continues Dr. Einstein, "we have for the moment had enough of anyone of German birth and shall be glad to hear as little as possible about Germans; but such an attitude would be in this case utterly unwarranted and beside the point, for here we have an exception. Now let me say and with complete conviction, that the understanding of the development and the influence of a man like Unruh will be an enrichment, a source of energy for everyone—truly, for everyone who struggles against the possibility of seeing his moral strength, his hopes and ideals sacrificed.

"His family, his friends, yes even his fatherland together with every material security, every possibility of existence—everything is offered up to the attainment of his great goal, without the slightest feeling of fear in his personal danger. The extraordinary successes which twenty years of activity as a poet and dramatist had brought him, all this too he left behind when his battle against Hitler became futile and he bade Germany farewell in 1932. Bitter disappointments concentration camp and finally flight were his fate, but he remains steadfast through it all and is, even today, true to his ideals and his life-mission."

At the end of this most readable account of a great personality we find a list of the works of this poet numbering 24 in all. Alvin Kronacher, in his generous appreciation of Unruh, makes the reader know him very well.

In *Borrowed Laughter,* by Syd. Turner (Bruce Humphries), we have the song of a young Texan poet of the American Southwest and New Mexico. "Let the Mind Thirst" attracted my attention:

I am sick of sipping poisons
from bottles on the mind's shelf
labelled (when the spirit's eye is clear)
"Life's Delusions".

My thoughts are sicker still, supping at plates
heaped with words of other men's confusions.

. . . Let them clean their own platters;
I must escape these cursed bottles; let the mind thirst,
and awhile neither read, nor think, nor write,
nor be aware of a world of men,
nor of the cask encasing self.

These delusions must rest——

While I seek some spot beside the sea,
or on a windy mountain's peak,
Where I may join the discourse of the waves,
or hear the wind's oratory beat my ears,
for hours and hours—until the days

Become peace, and my thoughts drink clear wine;
free of dregs of delusions,
that taste of strife,
mostly to destroy.

Youthful and engaging we find "This Idea":

Perhaps then,
This idea of Immortality
For the individual
Springs merely
From supreme selfishness
In the human heart;

That I can believe
In this idea
Of Immortality,
Because my desire
To keep you forever
Seems so utterly true.

And I am so selfish
Through every part
Of my dreams,
And wanting you,

There is a youthful pessimism in Mr. Turner's song, "Nothing Real But Dreams":

The scarlet shades of wounded day
Creep repentantly across the plain,
As darkness spreads blankets of gray
Over the blue hilltops again.

One lonely star with clear note strikes
The silences of fading skies,
As the wistful winds of soft twilight
Are murmuring dreams that cloud my eyes.

. . . Alone tonight in the western hills,
With thoughts that live in the past and you;

My memory seeking those twilights still
When we wove *one* dream of the sunset's hue.

A spark of pain, like the lone star's note
Pierces the whispering of my dreams,
And the beauty of twilight lies sad and remote,
For nothing is real but dreams, it seems.

The Seal of Faith is Mabel Gregory Wuesthoff's (Bruce Humphries) third book, and we are not surprised in looking over the volume that many of her poems have appeared in leading magazines and periodicals. The first poem in the book is taken from Corinthians 1-13; and Mrs. Wuesthoff's choice of this bespeaks a woman of faith, a believer in love. "The Seal of Faith is Love". We give it:

Faith in all things beautiful
Faith in all things good,
Faith that at last, some day, somewhere
All will be understood;
That all these mysteries of life
Too great for us to know
Shall be revealed when time is ripe
For love to overflow.

And we stop to read "Meeting":

One day, long years ago, I turned my head
And looked across a crowd into your eyes,
Acknowledging. Though not a word was said
My heart leaped high with instant glad surprise,
But time passed by on listless, laggard feet,
Forgetting to reward the promised hope
Of happiness that seemed so dear and sweet;
Nor could I quite forbid my mind to grope
Among dim thoughts for some imagined reason
That would account for such insistent pain
Blotting out all things earthly for a season
Through wild desire to read your glance again,
Yet we did meet, hands clasped and face to face,
Oblivious of time or sense or space.

To this writer's husband, a physician, the following tribute we read.

You, the physician, with a gentle heart,
Hands that were steel or velvet, and with eyes
Quick comprehending, missing no least part
Of human tragedy, yet firmly wise
In calm direction of a tortured mind—
When lesser ills impinged on precious hours
Your merry laugh and glance could always find
Instant response, and oftimes birds and flowers
Replaced dull subjects needing no expression,
And groundless fears were gaily tossed aside.
For weary hearts accept the bright impression
And may forget the pain they long to hide.

God of the faithful will reward you, dear,
For all your service of a lifetime here.

There is no modern snap-shot realism in these delightful poems and one is glad to be away from the "modern notes", so called.

In Search of the Permanent, by Alexander Alan Steinbach (Wings Press, New York), contains 24 essays written while the author was a Chaplain in Oklahoma. With the war's termination he has returned to his congregation in Brooklyn, where he is Rabbi of Temple Ahavath Sholom, and in the accompanying essays we find reflected the spiritual anguish of a sensitive soul in the presence of a world in conflict. This writer is imbued with the belief of an assurance of the divinity within man. How may one review such a book—pages and pages written in the sincerest belief in whatever may come to us in this immortal experience called life.

It is with emphatic interest that we turn to the *Golden Book of Catholic Poetry,* edited, with introduction, by Alfred Noyes (J. B. Lippincot Co., Philadelphia). Those who know him as I happen to have a cordial admiration for Alfred Noyes. One finds many names that one does not particularly associate as Catholic, but Mr. Noyes has made his explanation in the preface:

"In this book the principle of selection is as follows: the main body consists of poems by Catholics, roughly from the time of Chaucer to the present day. Translations are included only when they are in themselves fine poetry. There is a section of tributary poems by non-Catholics; but these have been included only when they embody some essentially Catholic idea. In the case of Catholics I have felt freer to choose poems on any subject, since Catholicism naturally touches every side of human life."

The book is some 400 odd pages and is a treasury of fine writing and thinking and should prove a spiritual aid in these confused days. It is a book to own and to turn to constantly. Mr. Noyes is a man of fine mentality and resultant culture. He made his first visit to this country as lecturer of the famous Lowell Foundation at Boston. During World War I, unable because of defective eyes to get into military service, he worked untiringly for his country with his pen and on the lecture platform; his work was recognised by the great honour of an appointment as Commander of the Order of the British Empire.

I beg leave to take a small space in the distinguished *Poetry Review,* in which, as an American, I present the American section. It was with personal sorrow that I heard of the death of H. G. Wells. I have a special reason for feeling a sense of obligation to him. I was returning on the *Olympic* a few years ago and had on my hands three fictional characters—children of my brain: Captain Ramon Kresser, a reverent worshipper of the reported doctrines of Jesus, and a soldier. Captain Kresser, who was in love with Julie de Lamballe, and Susanne de Poitiers, who wished them both disaster. Through reading Mr. Wells I learned of an exceedingly interesting moment in history when Napoleon and the Czar of Russia met—"to be friends" at Tilset on the Nieman. The first admonition of the Greeks of Aristotle's day to Grecian youth was to avoid ingratitude, and I am paying my debt to Mr. Wells today in this account. How many kinds of genius the British Isles provide! I am in constant admiration of them.

ALICE HUNT BARTLETT.

TO THE EDITOR:

"PARADISE LOST" AS ROMANCE

I beg space for a few words in reply to Mr. Prosper Dowden's letter in your December issue.

The question is not as to what constitutes a hero, but whether Milton made one of Satan, and the answer of the great majority of critics has been in the affirmative. Mr. Dowden mentions the "small sympathy" Milton extends to Satan, but that is very much of an understatement, as I showed at length in your January issue.

Mr. Dowden, in his first letter, said "The hero is Adam upon whom the wrath of both sides fell——". In confutation of that, I replied "Adam 'upon whom the wrath of both sides fell' did not *thereby* become a hero, but a victim." Mr. Dowden now refers to that as a "suggestion", but I would point out that Adam was undoubtedly a victim (like any non-combatant in many French towns during the war, who was bombed by both sides) and as to whether he was a hero was dependant upon his conduct (which I did not question) under such victimization,, whereas Mr. Dowden's statement made him a hero irrespective of his behaviour.

Mr. Dowden says "Envy has never yet induced any man to do aught save destroy", but merely to regard longingly what another possesses, without any ill-will being evinced towards the possessor, is quite a common meaning of "envy" and is lexicographically defined as such. He says "The envy that leads men to work and improve is not envy at all. It is ambition". Hence, in his view, while envy is invariably vile, ambition is laudable ; but what, save ambition led Hitler to instigate and commit countless crimes, Napoleon to wage numerous wars and Caesar to be assassinated by "the noble Brutus" !

Regarding the happy place where free beer, etc., is to be had, but no outlet provided for the intellect, and his statement that he is "accustomed to the robust", it is unnecessary for me to point out that his robustness is not merely bodily, but I do so (perhaps rather unfairly, but certainly not disparagingly) in order to demolish his belief that he would like to be in such a place, for his letters prove he obtains more real enjoyment (and lasting benefit) from his books than from his beer.

Hove. HOWARD PARSONS.

BYRON NOW

I would like to congratulate Mr. H. L. Senior on his admirable defence of Byron's memory and to supplement it with a few further examples that will testify to the recognition of the poet's bravery and worth. When Byron was at school at Harrow, an older boy was thrashing his fag Peel, afterwards Sir Robert. Byron, who always stood up for the oppressed and suppressed, offered to take half the strokes on himself. This so astonished the bully in question that he brought the chastisement to an immediate end. Cowards are the very last people to divert thrashings to themselves !

When in 1931 I had the honour and privilege of representing the Poetry Society at the unveiling of the "Memorial to Rupert Brooke and Immortal Poetry" on Scyros Isle, I took out from England a wreath of laurels gathered from Byron's garden at Newstead Abbey, and when I handed this to that great patriot Eleutherios Venizelos, Prime Minister of Greece, his whole face kindled with warmth and enthusiasm, and when in unveiling the memorial he addressed the assembly before him, he spoke with great emotion of Byron the Poet Liberator, and the great sacrifice he made for Greece, and wherever I went on my extensive pilgrimage in Greece, I found that Byron's memory was cherished by the inhabitants in every walk of life.

There is a story told of Frederic Harrison the Positivist, who, in the company of a friend, wishing to visit a certain place in the vicinity of Athens, hired a carriage, and on their entering the vehicle the driver said "Messeures would like to see the house of milord Byron?" Frederic Harrison replied "No, drive direct to where we told you". After they had travelled a considerable distance without reaching their goal, the driver suddenly stopped, and pointing with his whip and with a glowing smile said "Behold the house of milord Byron!" He then turned the carriage deliberately round and set out to drive them to their desired destination. This humble driver forfeited his time, used his horse's energy, and risked his gratuity in his desire to honour Byron's memory by making his countrymen see the house associated with him even against their wish and will.

Whole nations do not honour and cherish the memory of a cowardly, lazy man! I can only conclude that the lady critic who, in a recent number of THE POETRY REVIEW, who said Byron "was a coward and a lazy man", was ignorant of his full life and dauntless courage, and I would remind her, that, years ago when Mrs. Beecher Stowe of America cast a slur on Byron's memory, the whole British nation was moved to wrath, for they revered the poet's true worth and his heroic fight for freedom.

One recalls Stopford Brooke's apt censure regarding some unjust criticism of Tennyson, which will apply with equal force to Byron, who, be it remembered, was Tennyson's hero in his youthful days. Stopford Brooke said "The name of Tennyson and his works will endure in the hearts and minds of his fellow countrymen when his critics and their criticisms are together dust!"

Ruislip, November 1st. WALLIS MANSFORD.

THE PURPOSE AND PROCESS OF CONTEMPORARY POETRY

Under this heading, Mr. John Nance makes an appeal for a better understanding of "modern" poetry, in the course of which he quotes various opinions and philosophical arguments more or less relative to the subject but not immediately bearing upon it, all of which leads up to his culminating theory of "becoming". He does not, as far as I am concerned, carry conviction to its intended end and I imagine there will be others whom he will fail to convince.

In looking for a working definition of traditional poetry he quotes Housman on the function of poetry. I agree that a function of poetry is to transfuse emotion corresponding with what was felt by the writer, but when he seeks entirely to eliminate thought—I am not so sure. A good deal depends of course upon what he means by thought. Thought and emotion are strangely intermixed, thought itself being quite as capable of causing emotion as are bodily sensations; equally emotion is capable of producing thought. I should be inclined to qualify this definition by admitting the agency of thought, which cannot be properly omitted. The transfusion of emotion is not the sole purpose of poetry, though "to set up in the reader's sense a vibration corresponding to what was felt by the writer" is of course a purpose of poetry and applies in principle to all art. Mr. Nance then defines traditional poetry and quotes J. S. Eliot. Let us go a little more closely into the meaning of emotion, which may be described as a moving of the mind, or excitement of sensibility. Sensibility may be called awareness of impressions of mind or body. As I see it, a human being is made up of spirit or soul, and body. Spirit and body are linked by the intellect which receives impressions

on the one hand from bodily contacts and on the other from spiritual contacts. Therefore these can be bodily emotion and spiritual emotion or a combination of both.

Intellect I would define as the faculty which comprehends and uses ideas communicated to it by the senses, by perception, or by purely mental or spiritual agency. Intellect may therefore be described as the understanding and for the purpose of my further contention I will mention another faculty, the memory, which I will call the equivalent of a storehouse packed with records of all the experience of an individual's existence. These records may be clear and in good order or they may be faulty and perhaps damaged or have become inert owing to disuse, but at some time they have been responsive to the promptings of the intellect.

I know I am on delicate ground when I even so much as mention the word intellect in connection with poetry. Not only Housman but apparently Mr. Nance and other writers, seem to regard it with truly feminine distrust and dislike. Why? What is intellect but thought in action; how is emotion aroused but by thought interpreting sensible perceptions whether of the body or the spirit. This despised intellect is responsible ultimately for all the poetry ever written and when the poet is transfusing emotion, he is at the same time transmitting thought. That is of course inevitable, for none of this complicated series of operations can take place without the intervention of the intellect, which is thought in action.

Later in his article, Mr. Nance tells us: "I am afraid I must take you for a plunge first into physics and then into philosophy". I shall be content to see Mr. Nance explore those rather cloudy seeming deeps without following his example and regard at a respectful distance the not very accurate conclusions which he fishes up. He adds: "In the physical world,—there are no objects; there are simply events;—these events succeed one another and by their duration achieve existence". I should have been inclined to say—"by their existence they achieve duration", which simply shows how easily people may disagree. But one can understand how a man who looks upon duration as the sole reality should be willing to attribute the sole origin of poetry to an unknown automatic force.

"The poet", says Mr. Nance, "cannot compel so much as the subject matter of his poem". One rather wonders how this assertion can be reconciled with, for example, Milton's opening of "Paradise Lost". Surely there is conscious and deliberate dedication with no excuse for saying this was the result of a subconscious mind. Merely to assert that all poetry springs from the subconscious mind is to beg the question. He continues, "If that summary reminds you of a number of aspects of modern poetry which you most dislike, you have at least discovered that such poetry is the poetry of a mind imbued with the conception of "becoming". This conception he speaks of thus: "I grasp the notion of existence because I myself exist, I grasp the notion of becoming because I myself become. It is the innermost ego of all which is and becomes". And he calls this new. It is as old as the human race and of creation itself. This is the law of change under which we and all things are becoming altered continually; not only our physical part which moves to decay, but our spiritual make-up also is becoming daily closer to the final shape that will be ours when we eventually reach the end of our duration here.

Meanwhile the new critics, holding a precarious balance between emotionalism on one side and traditionalism on the other appear reluctant to admit any genuine relationship between intellect or thought and poetry. I do not want to

insist that thought should be paramount, but I maintain that thought has a rightful place there, and more than that, it is indispensable.

In this connection let us examine one or two lines of poetry sufficiently authenticated to stand criticism and see how far this theory of non-transmission of thought applies to them. "Oh she doth teach the torches to burn bright". Who is going to say there is not both thought and emotion here? And the thought involved is of a most subtle and delicate nature; it goes beyond the emotion of admiration implied and acclaims the brightness of her presence, far exceeding that of the torch light; in short, it is a fine example of thought and emotion re-acting, each on the other and on the reader.

"It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear,
Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear."

Here again is emotion, intense emotion of a high order, but such richness of thought, such a galaxy of metaphorical wealth as only a mighty poet could have assembled and so expressed.

When critics urge so strongly the importance of emotion in poetry and the altogether unsuitability of the admission of thought, I doubt if they are always so near the essential quality of poetry as they would wish. When I see the would-be poet exhorted in so many words to deliberately surrender his conscious intellect to the influence of a semi-trance, a dream-like state and thus await inspiration from the sub-conscious mind; I confess I am amazed, nor can I believe that anything good can emerge from such evocation. Mr. Nance speaks of the *un*-conscious mind, but that I suppose is a slip of the pen; an unconscious mind could receive no impressions. He also quotes Housman as saying the intellect could not be trusted to recognise poetry when it saw it. I ask by what means is poetry to be recognised if not by the intellect?

It will not do to say, "I feel emotion from reading this, therefore it is poetry"; apart from the fact that prose might transfuse emotion. What enables you to recognise your emotion except your conscious intellect? Or are we to have sub-conscious criticism as well as sub-conscious poetry?

I am aware of the theory of the sub-conscious mind and it is well established in scientific circles; but it is still an unproved theory and is not the only explanation of the mental phenomena involved. The truth is we know comparatively very little about the mind; many of its more unaccountable manifestations seem to be automatic responses to previous intellectual impulses, especially those arising from the memory and the imagination.

I am not a disbeliever in inspiration and probably go much further in that direction than many of those who look to the dim depths of the sub-conscious for enlightenment. But I do not think that inspiration comes lightly or often to poets, yet, there is such a thing as Divine Grace and the poet's mind may be peculiarly susceptible to its influence. But the emotional thrill imparted by poetry to the reader is seldom or never of the nature of direct inspiration. The emotion set up in the reader's mind is caused by the unique technique which is at the command of a poet, that arrangement of language which immediately captivates the mind.

For myself, rather than attribute poetic inspiration to emanations from somewhat nebulous sources I should look for it in that exaltation of mind which comes on occasion to the poet and in which with spirit and mind attuned he achieves true poetry. This is, I venture to say, the true source of poetry, not indeed to be achieved by the intellect, nor can it be attained without it; certainly not to be

taught by any precept or otherwise acquired. It is the Divine gift of poetry, inherent in the poet and through whose exercise of his inestimable talent he delights his fellow men.

Thetford, Nov. 15. RAYMUND BOURNE.

THE REVIEWER CHAMPIONED

May I ask whether the letters appearing in the October/December, 1946, issue of THE POETRY REVIEW under the heading "Criticism Criticized" constitute a private fight or may anyone join in? I would, as a "long-service" subscriber to THE POETRY REVIEW, like to make a few comments. Constant reading of the "P.R." has given me certain basic values to which I consider it is necessary to conform in the writing of poetry.

Your reviewer has "taken it on the chin" from three punches—Arthur Ball, Lionel Monteith and the offending compiler of "For Those Who Are Alive". Apart from the fact that it is advisable for any author who receives adverse criticism to accept such comment, rightly or wrongly expressed, by "suffering in silence", it is painfully obvious that Howard Sergeant has "enlisted" the aid of a few literary acquaintances to champion his cause.

To begin with Champion No. 1, in the guise of A. W. Ball, is himself a contributor to the anthology in question and could hardly do otherwise than back his sponsor up. True, his poem "In a Meadow" is a nearer approach to poetry than are the contributions of Howard Sergeant himself. Who, I ask, can find reason or rhyme in this—

> "What milk-and-honey reasons can they find to conjure faith ir us, to whom life has already opened inescapable horizons and montaged the fabian myths infesting history"?

Your reviewer, staggering under the impact of these two blows, receives the literary K.O. from Champion No. 3, the gallant Lionel Monteith. Mr. Monteith is not himself represented in this particular anthology but this does not mean that he has no close connection with Mr. Sergeant. They are both co-editors of a proposed volume of short stories, of which I understand a high literary standard may be expected. If the standard set in "For Those Who Are Alive" is any criterion, then the outlook is indeed black!

Your reviewer has conducted himself with admirable restraint, and having carried out his task in "P.R." so creditably should not allow such trivial incidents to interfere with what is obviously a sound, well-balanced judgment.

Wilfred H. Bartlett's poem, "Who Pass The Swinging Lantern", and Sarah Stafford's "The Unborn" would grace any anthology of English poetry. Wrenne Jarman and Jean Kenward reach their usual high standards, the rest?—"It is a tale, told by an idiot!"

Mr. Monteith flies eagerly to Howard Sergeant's prefatory note for suitable quotations, from the same source I re-echo the compiler's own words—"It remains to be seen whether their experience and awareness of life during the years of conflict have served to clarify their vision". I would suggest that "clarification" is something of which Mr. Sergeant knows very little.

I cannot defend or attack your reviewer's remarks on "The Leavening Air", Mr. Sergeant's own poems. I wasted enough money on buying his anthology!

Do not for a moment suppose I think Howard Sergeant incapable of writing good poetry. He can and does, as in *John O' London's Weekly* on times, or in "P.R.", "Prospect", etc., but after a well-deserved initial success, he seems to

be outstripping himself in an endeavour to "be different". He claims to belong to, or to advance the claims of no particular "school of thought" or "cult". I say emphatically that he ranks highly in the cult of the obscure. He does as great a dis-service to the name of Poetry with cheap imitations of those arch-priests of "Hyphenated-Obscurity" Dylan Thomas and Keidrych Rhys as did Ezra Pound to American literature. Apart from his political utterances, Pound should have been incarcerated for his writings alone! The real tragedy is that works of this nature should go out of the country and be construed as being representative of English poetry.

No concluding remarks could be more apt than those of your reviewer—"It is a warfare not of traditionalism versus innovation as such, but against perversions by coteries and schools whose driving force is pretension and a self-conscious ambition which we regard as fundamentally inimical to the general interest of poetry".

I cannot write more. Having already contributed to the pages of THE POETRY REVIEW, I feel it is my bounden duty to send Howard Sergeant a contribution to raise the level of his next publication! Yours faithfully,

London, Nov. 5. B. C. M.

[Horatius welcomes this doughty supporter and can assure him he will continue to defend the bridge and that there is no breach. In justice to the attacking party we can exonerate the units from the justifiable suspicion of collusion: we were assured the champions acted independently.—*Ed.*]

STEPHEN COLLINS FOSTER

In the early sixties of the nineteenth century, during part of the closing days of his short, feverish life, Stephen Foster lived in Greensburg, in Western Pennsylvania. During this period his wife Jane (Jeannie of the Light Brown Hair), supported the family of three by working as telegrapher operator at the Greensburg station of the Pennsylvania Railroad, having been appointed to the position by Andrew Carnegie, who was Superintendent of the Pittsburg Division of the P.R.R. at that time.

The Fosters lived at the old Fisher House which was operated by James Borlin. The Fosters lived there one whole winter. Stephen was sick and unable to work during this period. He remained in his room in the hotel most of the time; but he played the reed organ and sang a great deal, to the entertainment of the people about the hotel, especially the children. The following spring the Fosters got a house of their own in Greensburg. Later Stephen went to New York, where he died alone in poverty.

Little did the sick, depressed troubadour suspect that he would become a member of the Hall of Fame; that costly memorials would be erected in his honour, and that a great university would build a magnificent shrine of art to perpetuate his name among the great of the earth! Foster, with his homely ballads, has sown the seeds of kindness, brotherhood and peace which shall bloom along the wayside "while the caissons of war", with their ominous rumblings of death "go rolling along", to be finally lost to memory beyond the misty horizon of oblivion.

Stephen Foster, to my mind, is one of the most romantic, pathetic, tragic figures of history—unforgettable in his simple and unpretentious power, his great gift to express in song the basic joys, sorrows and yearnings of the human heart.

This Foster poem is one of a collection by the writer of this sketch which will appear in book form.

Few, perhaps, will find anything but sincerity in the poem, lacking as it does the modern smartness of the times. As a reader of the *Poetry Review* may I add my word of appreciation of the high standard of literature which you maintain.

He caught the cosmic tones that ring
Melodic paths among the spheres,
And brought them down for men to sing
Of homely joys and tender tears.
He came to earth when the rye and wheat
Were bowing low to the reaper's blade,
And dwelt in a cottage, white and neat,
Close where the wheel-churned waters played.

His flute sang sweet to the ebon crews
Who peopled the docks in his haven of dreams;
Visions of keel-boats and bark canoes
And timber rafts from the mountain streams—
Low humble craft of a vanishing hour
Drift by in the mists of a winding way,
Lost in the wake of the mighty power
Of pulsing steam of a newer day.

The loaded deck and crowded floor
Reflect a changeful, brooding moon;
And sad, or gay, the stevedore
Responds to Foster's lovely tune.
The darkey picks the cotton bole;
He cuts the cane; and in his breast
Rich music rolls to cheer his soul
And lull it to contented rest.

Stephen parried a little while
As his fingers wakened the silent strings
With an answering sob and an ardent smile
That spring divine from the heart of things.
He sensed the all-pervading theme
That brooks no planetary bound
In a higher realm where love supreme
And universal peace are found.

Greensburg, Pa. DAVID LEROY YOUNT.

Dallas Kenmare's *Elegy for Two Voices* which was printed in THE POETRY REVIEW in connection with last year's Greenwood award, and the subject of a subsequent impressive reading, has been published in volume form (Burrows Press, Cheltenham 6s. od.) with other poems in similar metre which this thoughtful writer has made particularly her own, and in content as well as form suggests that she is a later and more spiritual Walt Whitman.

The Premium Editor's Report

IF I were asked for my most outstanding impression of this Premium Competition I should say that is was a feeling of surprise, mingled with regret, at the poor showing of many of our older competitors whose poems seemed at times to be either perfunctory or to wear a tentative aspect, as though their authors had either lost their old touch or were experimenting. Human beings are much too often afflicted with a desire for change and this I suppose is natural to the spirit of man, but it remains true that change for its own sake is seldom good and one can go farther and fare much worse with nothing but regret to repay the effort. There are therefore many new names in our Honours List and many of the poems so distinguished have a character, no doubt natural to their writers, which is novel to this contest and I do not think that my preference for them is due to any change in myself. What has attracted me has been that very air of serenity or sureness which always attends things written in a manner normal to the writer.

Our poetry, like our speech and behaviour, should present an individual aspect. However inspired it may be, our sub-conscious depths are still ours, however little we know of them, or may penetrate them, and the idiom or manner of our expression, that secondary element of poetry, is even more particularly individual; and the virtue of a good and, above all, natural technique is that it interposes less obstruction to the intellectual art of expression of things rising from the spiritual depth than a manner being tried out in the interests of change in which the writer is not completely at home. No one can be master of all styles or, in verse making, happy in all metres, indeed I believe that there should never be a conscious selection of metre however one might experiment with rhyme schemes. Metres should suggest themselves unconsciously and if they do they will be found always to suit the theme, which is far from being the case when the selection is conscious and dictated by nothing more important than a taste for variety.

I believe and have often asserted that poetry must be in the main an unrehearsed, almost impromptu, utterance and that belief goes too for the manner in which it is uttered.

Another impression of mine is that many competitors seem to be in error as to what duties some parts of speech may properly perform. We are, I suppose, more addicted to rhyme than any other collection of poets in this country, and many of you show a skill in the handling of this musical decoration which invites my admiration; but there are others who, while not guilty of rhyme words, are still content to spoil their rhythm in aid of the rhyme, and who will even be found capable of using a mere preposition or a conjunction and such like verbal odds and ends, for rhyming purposes. This I consider to be quite wrong, for the rhyming word should always be in itself a word of singular importance to the line and not a mere bit of mortar like a preposition whose importance is so minute that we seldom pronounce it with any definite vigour but merely slur over it as being, what indeed it is, of no account. Thus when one sees a preposition like "of" used to rhyme with "love" one gets inevitably an impression either that the writer was in a difficulty which he could not resolve, or that his ear is not truly attuned. Rhyming, of course, is only supportable when it seems to be utterly unrehearsed and inevitable and when it flows off the tongue easily and with a normal emphasis, and when also it insists on that little pause at the line

ending which does not even perhaps merit a comma but which nevertheless is there in our normal habit of speech. After a preposition or a conjunction, whose function is to join, there can be no such pause and the rhyme, therefore, if such a word be used is not even bad, it does not exist. Further, to leave a line which should be in some sort a complete entity so blatantly in the air is bad prosody.

Another thing which troubled me was misuse of words. We all of us have, stored away in our minds, some errors and misconceptions as to the true meaning of words which we use and of the way they are pronounced. Some mistakes of this sort are therefore inevitable, but not so many as appeared in this competition. Almost everybody has a dictionary and there is no shame in consulting it, not only for meaning and for pronunciation, but even to see if the word in fact exists in this tremendous language of ours. Curiosities like "lack-lorn", a word used by one of our competitors, would certainly be avoided by a little care of the sort recommended, and the incorrect use of such words as "perfume", where so many people put the accent on the wrong syllable, would be prevented, to the great improvement of rhythm.

Finally I would say a word about the good poem spoiled by the obscure passage. This is a more difficult matter and I can suggest no other means of eradicating such blemishes than the enlistment of the services of an intelligent and candid friend. We none of us say always what we mean to say, due partly to our incorrect ideas of what some words actually mean, but more often I think because thought outstrips the pen and our minds, at a critical moment, are perhaps involved with more compelling matters. These obscurities do, of course, become apparent to the writer if he puts the poem away until he has half forgotten it and then reads it with a freshly attentive eye. To read something which is already firmly and clearly in the mind is often enough not to read what is on the paper but what the mind supplies to a comprehension which is already too familiar with the intention.

The Premium this time is divided among four competitors, a compromise solution which indicates my inability, so far as two of them were concerned, to establish a preference. The other two were easier to place and yet I could not make up my mind to leave them in the Highly Commended list, feeling that they ought to share the higher honour of the Premium Award.

The sum of £3 each therefore is awarded to Miss M. W. Gilbert, Swindon; and Mrs. Muriel Spark, London, W.2; and £2 each to Wilfred H. Bartlett, Calverleigh, Devon; and Mrs. Patricia Simpson, Blackheath. Both Miss Gilbert and Mrs. Spark sent in poems which were imaginatively inspired to the point where the emotional effect was as immediate and compelling as a personal experience. This is a considerable feat, possible only to the true poet, and for that reason these two names must come first, but that is not to deny to my second pair the title to genuine poetic quality; but Mr. Bartlett's beautiful sonnet was more easily inspired and resulted in a quieter emotional mood, while Mrs. Simpson's poem, much stronger than Mr. Bartlett's emotionally, was inspired by a personal grief, the simplest and yet the most potent seed of true poetry. It might be argued that how or why inspiration comes to, or is invoked by, the poet is not my business and the argument might be difficult to refute; and yet the poet's field should be wide, as wide as the Universe itself, and this it cannot be if it is limited by personal experience. The poet must be able to range at will upon the wings of his imagination, not only through space, but up and down the stream of time; and while I do not doubt for a moment that my second two winners can do this, the poems with which they saluted me this time were born

within personal limits and, while definitely none the worse for it, seemed to me to possess for that reason a little less merit.

Miss Gilbert's poem, which follows, has both emotional and pictorial quality, the one supplementing and intensifying the other in a manner entirely persuasive to the reader. I was impressed, too, by the underlying thought, one which has visited me also, that excessive grief by the living for the dead would, if the departed could know of it, seriously impair their bliss in the hereafter. Perhaps, one day, we shall learn to rejoice with those who pass on.

The Drowned Hebridean Fisherman

"MOURN not for me, my love;
Your sorrow lies heavier upon me than a shroud,
Lighter the waters above me in their surge
Than the hopeless weight of your tears.
I am restless nights you lie a-bed in silent weeping,
Biting the blanket to still your sobs, and the tears running slow
And quiet down your dear lost cheeks.
You cry for yourself, who have lost me, and for me,
Who have lost so many things,—the warmth of flames, and laughter,
The love-light in your eyes, and my hands caressing you;
The thickness of my jersey, soaked with spray, and the deep
Satisfaction of a catch, the feel of my boat beneath my fingers;
The sun on hillside grass, and the colours of sea and sky,
Stretching in spacious loveliness above the furthest Isles.
But, O, my love, I have better than these
In the Land-under-the-Waters; I have rest undreamt-of,
Sleep as deep as the Island seas, and the spray wild in my thoughts.
Company I have in death the finest of the West, heroes,
Poets, music-makers, and men who sailed to the seas
At the edge of the world, where the foam beneath their bows
Was laced with light; I have forgotten
Earthly things; neither memories of fire or grass or hands
Can move me now. I watch the colours change above me,
And the endless drift of waters. Only your tears
Have power to keep me restless in this world of quiet.
Let me but slip from that remorseless chain of gentleness
And I am free, to sleep among the depths
Of black and green for ever.
Seven times seven the storms may sound
And I shall not stir. The cry of the gulls and the long
Sad croon of the sea my only dirge, the winds
My harp, and the seals my mourners,—I ask no other.
One am I for ever with sea-wrack flung upon the beach,
And the creamy splendour of the waves of storm;
One with the surge of beauty and the roar, and the rain
Dropping in from the sea in veils of finest grey;
And one with the quietest nights, and the waves spreading
In mighty silvered petals up the wide white sands;
Leave me to rain and storm and sea; leave me to rest
In the quiet heart of the wildest waters,
And sleep you well of nights, my love.

Mrs. Spark's poem is, I think, as compelling in its emotional power, partly as the result of its form and the "charged" quality of its utterance, and partly because of its atmosphere of hopeless remorse. The inexorable character of the doom that is within us is mercilessly portrayed and the thought, too, of finding comfort in turning the knife in the self-inflicted wound. On that note the poem ends and we print it here in full.

The Well

I

HERE in the Sorek Valley, west of Zorah
we say amongst ourselves, "Our village lies
like dew upon a leaf". We Philistines
mean that our pasturelands and vineyards know
little of drought, have seen no evil signs
of famine. Ripeness from the river's flow
weighs down our vines, so heavily they grow.
Oh, vines,
where shall I be before the next grape gathering?

Will I go southward, then, to some great city
where no-one knows my story, there to join
the half-light people? Shall I find relief
from bitterness within the gates and wall
of Askelon? Shall I discard my grief
at Gaza too, where Samson in a brawl
rose and walked off with posts and gates and all?
Oh, leaf,
full fraught with dew, succulent Sorek Valley,
cradle of mighty Samson who is dead
at last, a man of Sorek by his birth
and untamed boyhood. In the violent hours
of his fierce youth he breathed this Sorek air
as if it were the essence of his powers.
But I will follow his dead footsteps where
he trod. Askelon's towers, take my despair.
Towers
of Askelon, receive my days of weeping.

It seems my footsteps lead me all my days
compelled by some enchantment, to the well,
and here I linger now within the ways
of my lost friends, fast-rooted by a spell.
The silent women come and go but none
will raise her eyes to mine. No furtive word
is whispered in my ear. Not any one
comes close, although all day I have not stirred.
Rain has been splashing, and my dress is wet.

My foot is making patterns in the sand
as if my shapeless mind could so be set
in order. Is it thus in every land,

this circumstance of women at the well?
Are they eternally all-powerful, then,
to germinate all motive, to compel
their word to shape the very lives of men?

First memories are sweet.
The village well is my first memory,
when my unsteady feet
would climb the stony street
to join the fountain-head fraternity,
where in the dust and heat
women and maidens meet.

Even when I was grown
In early morning and before night fell
I loved to go alone
bearing my jar of stone
to where the women loitered at the well,
communing, maid and crone,
in tell-tale undertone.

But once I heard a name
in rumour hushed, a name I did not know:
"*Samson*—he is the same
who set the wheat aflame
at Timnath. He it was who with one blow
severed the lion's frame.
Imagine—if he came . . ."

I did not see the coming of the night
upon me. I repeated every word.
"Imagine" they had said, "this Samson might
come north". And suddenly as if I heard
the pacing of a giant close behind
I dropped the water-jar and fled in fright
homeward, then whimpering like a child to find
my brother's open door, and lamps alight.

I asked my brother, "Truly have you seen
this Samson whom they speak of at the well?"
"Yes, and he is superb, a cross between
giant and god, and so I have heard tell,
unscrupulous and brave". He laughed, "Beware
of meeting him, for you would lose your head
over his mighty sinews. Yes, take care
Delilah". "But he will not come", I said.

II

Only a month ago, the meddlesome
voices began: ". . . and have you made him tell
the secret yet? They say that all things come

to those who wait, and you have waited long
and patiently, Delilah; you should know
the way to coax a man, however strong
and resolute". Only a month ago
the murmured mockery became a whine:
". . . but are we conquerors or conquered, then
Delilah, if you are a Philistine
find us his secret. There are other men
beside the Israelite, and you are young . . ."

In truth, they kindled the incessant fire
that burned within me even while I clung
to Samson, the unquenchable desire
to know the secret of his strength. But thrice
he mocked me. Oh, if he had not
mocked me, I might have made a sacrifice
of vanity. I am no patriot.

They came, the chiefs of Gaza, secretly;
they came again, the Philistines, with fine
flattery, with bait and bribery.
But Samson was no enemy of mine
and they were strangers. Should I then discover
for them his secret? Must I seek to find
for them a weapon to destroy my lover,
Samson, the incontestable and kind?
They sent their councillors with words and swords,
with churlish muttering, with specious play
for Samson's mystery. They came, the lords
of Askelon to tempt me, every day.
Day after day, but never did I show
a yielding of my will, nor give a word.
Did I hold Samson's secret none could know
until they taunted me: "Have you not heard
what they are saying at your village well . . .?"

Great Samson lies asleep.
Princes of Gath, my doors are open wide.
Captains of Gaza, creep
at last to shear your sheep
within my fold: he lies secure inside,
witless, in slumber deep
while his safeguard I keep.

Great Samson like a child
lies sleeping. All the men of Askelon
cannot provoke the wild,
passionate, giant-styled
fury that once they knew, so swiftly gone.
Now Samson sleeps the mild
sleep of the poor witch-wiled.

Great Samson is awake,
staggering madly like a lamb new-born.
As if by some mistake
the walls no longer quake
for Samson, and he knows the sheep is shorn.
"Delilah, come and take
my hand, for pity's sake."

III

I see in vision an unending train
of women, moving down the unfledged years
towards a soundless well; a steadfast chain
of purpose, but the measure of my tears
would overflow each empty water-jar
carried head-high could all the ironies
of womankind disturb me. Those who are
inspirers of my basest sin, by these
am I now judged. Yet which of them has known
a Samson? Having known, who could but I
enact this crime supremely? Who alone
but Samson as extravagantly die?

All day I have not stirred, and now night falls,
but when I sleep the dream will be the same,
for always, both in sleep and consciousness,
some instinct bids me gaze into the steep
shaft of a well.
I am that fathomless
chasm of my dream! I, the abysmal deep!
I am the fugitive whose trail I keep.
Oh yes,
I am the hunter as I am the hunted.

I will go southward, then, to some great city.
I will escape the women and the well
to follow where a phantom lies in wait
within the streets of Gath, concealed behind
the walls of Askelon, and at the gate
of Gaza. I will hear the ghostly grind
of millstones turning, fettered to the blind,
the great,
wraith of my lover Samson, who is dead.

I will go southward to the ruined palace
that dying Samson brought upon the heads
of my own kinsmen, so to realise
his final triumph and his last despair.
I will pursue the spectre whose two eyes
are blinded. I will find his covert lair
and dwell within: I will lie waiting where

he lies,
in wait among the vines and the wild olives.

Mr. Bartlett's sonnet has two merits—perfection of technique and a tenderness of expression—which aid and supplement one another most adequately. I put these qualities in that order, not because technique is the more important, but because without it Mr. Bartlett's tenderness, the greater thing, would have been lost. That is, of course, the virtue of prosodic skill, that it should serve as a frame, without roughness or botching, to show forth the picture. It can never be more than this, nor without the picture can it be more than an emptiness without significance.

EVENING SACRAMENT

A BIRD-BELL calls to worship, and a bee,
Girdled with gold, mumbles an evening hymn,
His fingers feeling for eternity
In lilies whiter than the cherubim.
Now is the silver chalice lifted high
At twilight 's misted altar, the rich wine
Poured in profusion on the western sky
That drowsy earth might savour the divine.
And breathing the sweet incense of the rose
Swung by a breeze that stirs the garden air,
I taste, a moment, evening's red repose,
My spirit steeped in wonder charged with prayer:
Sipping the sacramental wine that gleams
Wherever dreamers break the bread of dreams.

And lastly, but not least, Mrs. Simpson's poem, "To R.H.S." This is a bravely uplifting thing in which courage and a high heart discover the proper anodyne for human grief. In reading it one is sustained by a vigour of mind which finds in loss a spur, and in the contemplation of the detail of sorrow not a wallowing despair but a nobler purpose. Sincerity breathes in every unstudied line and hope is born of it, fearless if humble, to restore our faith in humanity and our courage to face life.

To R.H.S.
(Died of Wounds, Burma, Feb. 12th, 1945.)

WHAT shall his memorial be?
No pillar of cold stone
For crowds to hurry by with eyes downcast;
No name upon a scroll
Deep-buried in the pages of the past.
Better it be
A gradual quickening in this sleeping heart,
Till from its embers living sparks shall rise
Of that immortal love
Which flamed to triumph under jungle skies.

Each hour a little less of bitterness
For those whose journey took an easier course;
Who never knew their burning spirits chilled
By tropic rains, disease,

And ceaseless longings ever unfilfilled;
But neither knew
The swift attainment of maturity—
The zest—the fellowship—the trampled fears—
The draught of life drained deep—
The centuries encompassed in so few brief years.

Each hour a little more of gentleness,
Of his humanity and tender strength:
So this dull spirit may immortalise
That eagerness for life
Which leap't beyond this life in sacrifice,
And poured forth blood
To purify the surface of the world
From that corruption which had turned it sour.

* * *

Let this be his memorial,
And grant me strength to build it, hour by hour.

In the Highly Commended list are none but excellent poems, many of them challengers for a share in the award, but just failing, for me, to prove their right to it. Space forbids that I should discuss them individually, as I should like to do, but I could say that generally they have failed of the highest place through a lesser realisation of that essential emotional effect which I look for:

Vivien Bulkley, Lyme Regis
K. M. Clark, Shipley
J. R. Kitto, Twickenham
M. W. F. Longlands, Hove
J. G. Marash, Coventry
Elizabeth Meldrum, Pangbourne
Juanita Peirse, Chelsea
Lorna Westall, Tanyards
Marguerite Tudor Williams, Walton

The Commended list is a long one, and every one of the poems was a pleasure to read. The general level of our entries is indeed improving although is should be known that they number many hundreds. Consequently a mention indicates no small merit, for the total in these lists is no more than 43—certainly less than ten per cent. of the whole:

Capt. J. C. S. Bearne, London, S.W.1
L. E. Brodie, Dublin
Leonard Butcher, Sutton
Edna Chard, Beckenham
E. Fancett, Stanmore
M. Sheppard Fidler, Twickenham
C. E. J. Fryer, Maidstone
Jessie B. Heard, Bristol 7
C. B. M. Heywood, London, W.C.2
J. Martin, Fulwood
P. J. Martin, Bracknell
James Crawford Milne, Arbroath
Irene Mundy Mobbs, Wickford
Nancy Pollok, Tettenhall
Lt. J. H. N. Pope, R.N., Edinburgh
Hubert Riley, Westgate-on-Sea
Lallie Roberts, Liverpool, 16.
Bertha M. Skeat, Sedbergh
Gladys Hunkin, St. Ives
Marguerite Johansen, Swindon
Cullen Jones, San Rafael, Cal.
Redvers H. King, London, W.C.1
Dr. J. C. Lyth, Barnes
Eva Martin, Brighton
Ivy F. Smytheman, New Zealand
Vera Goring Thomas, London, W.11
Teresa P. Vasey, Selsey
B. B. Walker, Nottingham
Julian Walker, Derby
E. J. Worthington, Rossett

Practical evidence of "the survival of Rupert Brooke" indicated by Timothy Rogers in THE POETRY REVIEW two years ago, is provided by the publication by Fabers of a new and more complete edition of Brooke's poetical works (8s. 6d.), edited by Geoffrey Keynes who points out in an admirable preface that "when a poet has passed his third decade of posthumous fame and has come to be accepted as a national possession, his early efforts acquire an interest for the evidence they afford of the influences at work during formative years, even though their literary merit be not great. Although 38 poems have now been added to the corpus of Brooke's work, many others still remain uncollected having been rejected at the discretion of the Trustees as unworthy of inclusion now or at any future date." These additional poems which are admittedly juveniliar, dating from his Rugby days and including two long poems composed for the school prize, are of great interest in studying the making of a poet. It would be unkind to suggest that some of the between-year poems justify the revulsion that caused him to claim in the first of his most famous sonnets that he was glad to

"Leave the sick hearts that honour could not move,
And half-men, and their dirty songs and dreary,
And all the little emptiness of love !"

As his present editor points out, Brooke was no callow youth when he died, and the notes that he sounded in his later poems where those of a sincere and deep feeling which cannot be silenced by academic criticism in which some of the younger critics have indulged, challenging, sometimes scornfully, the popular favour accorded so lavishly and continuously to Brooke's poetry in an attempt to demolish his literary reputation.

A very unbalanced "Anthology of the Seasons" published by Arthur H. Stockwell Ltd., contains neither table of contents nor list of contributors, but embedded in a lot of doggerel we do find a few meritorious poems by Thomas Astore J. Sackville Martin, and Rachel E. Boulton.

Preparations are now being made for the establishment of a series of "Shakespeare Yearbooks", the first volume of which is due to appear in April, 1948. The "Yearbooks" will be published by the Cambridge University Press and are sponsored by a joint committee representing the University of Birmingham, The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre and the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust. Under the supervision of an advisory board of experts including Professor Peter Alexander, Mr. H. S. Bennett, Professor Allardyce Nicoll, Mr. George Rylands, Professor Charles Sisson, Professor F. P. Wilson and Professor J. Dover Wilson, they will aim at providing a critical survey of notable current activities in the study and production of the plays besides containing original contributions on various aspects of the dramatist's work.

In face of brick-bats, I am still convinced that to be full-bodied, poetry, of whatever type, must avail itself of the musical and aesthetic resources of language; that the "lyric cry", however stately or subdued it may sound, at times, is inseparable from the highest and most enduring stanzas, and that true poetry can never afford to sacrifice to objectivity that mysticism which enables a poet to sense a flower as an earthly embodiment of some delicate, spiritual emotion rather than merely to see it as a beautifully petalled composition of corolla, pistil and stamen.

Bronx, New York. HUGH WILGUS RAMSAUR.